



Grosswiler Family receives Conservation Achievement Recognition

We are grateful that the Grosswiler family placed almost 400 acres of their land in the West Valley in conservation easements with Flathead Land Trust in 2017 and 2018. The conserved land has amazing conservation values with its rich farm soils and unique 45-acre pothole wetland that is critical for tens of thousands of migratory waterfowl, over 20 species of shorebirds, and hundreds of Sandhill Cranes each year. The conserved land safeguards part of the only known fall staging area for Sandhill Cranes in the Flathead Valley. We are privileged that this family has also allowed for construction of a public bird viewing area overlooking the pothole wetland on the conserved land. The public bird viewing area that opened last fall has quickly become a popular birding site in the Flathead.

Flathead Land Trust worked with Catherine Baier and Cindy Marvin of the Grosswiler family to put the conservation easements in place, but many in the family were behind the conservation endeavor. Cindy's son, Tanner, helped initiate conservation of the family land. Tanner and his family live on the property that ultimately was conserved. He loved the sandhill

cranes using his family's land and did not want to see the portion of the farm so important to them developed or subdivided.

Flathead Land Trust had been reaching out to the family letting them know about conservation options for their land, but it was Tanner who reached out to Flathead Land Trust to learn more about conserving the family land after attending a talk Flathead Land Trust gave about sandhill cranes for the West Valley Naturalist's Association. Catherine's daughter, Sara Long, was also quite supportive and Catherine's Aunt Grace Criswell was quite proud of the family's decision.

The Grosswiler family has a long and rich farming history in the Flathead beginning with a 160-acre homestead in the 1880s. The family gradually increased their holdings to over 3,000 acres. The family has grown alfalfa, wheat, barley, oats, and sometimes hay on their property. Just to the south of the conserved land the Grosswiler family ran a large dairy operation from 1960 to 2006.

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Ribbon cutting ceremony at the grand opening of the Bird Viewing Area. Members of the Grosswiler family are center front, surrounded by project supporters.

MARCH FLATHEAD AUDUBON CALENDAR

Monday, March 4, 2019. 6 PM. FAS Board of Directors Meeting, Gateway Community Center, US Hwy 2 West, Kalispell. All welcome.

Monday, March 11, 2019. 7 PM. Flathead Audubon General Meeting, Gateway Community Center, US Hwy 2 West, Kalispell. All welcome. See page 3.

Saturday and Sunday, March 23-24, 2019. Freezout Lake. See page 5 for details.

Sunday, March 31, 2019, 9 AM. Spring Migration in the Lower Flathead Valley with Craig Hohenberger. See page 5 for details.

BIRD OF THE MONTH

Bobolink (*Dolichonyx oryzivorus*)

by Cory Davis

It's pronounced "bob uh link." Although, you could use one of its several other names including skunk blackbird, ricebird or reedbird. Their genus, *Dolichonyx*, means "long claw" and the species name, *oryzivorus*, means "rice eating." It does have relatively long claws for a songbird, which are used for grasping reeds and grasses. Of course, it's also known as the bird in the backwards tuxedo with the golden top hat!

Bobolinks are actually members of the Blackbird family, Icteridae, though they are smaller than many of their cousins. Their bill is also closer to a finch bill, for eating the grass seeds and insects upon which they feed. In the breeding season, males are black with white wing patches and white down their backs and rump. The back of their heads are a buffy yellow that is so clearly delineated it looks like they're wearing a bike helmet. The females, and non-breeding season males, look almost sparrow-like with a brown and buffy streaked back and distinctive dark stripes on their crown and eye-line. Their plumage allows them to blend in with the grasses and reeds that they build their nests under.

Bobolinks arrive in Montana in mid-May and leave sometime in August. Males sing while flying low over the grasses of their territory to attract a mate. Technically, Bobolinks are polygynous with a handful of males setting up territories with multiple females. However, they were one of the first species where we learned that female songbirds sometimes have something going on the side. Consequently, the eggs in a single nest often may be from multiple fathers.

Bobolinks almost hold the record for the longest songbird migration. Their annual 12,500 mile round trip vacation to grasslands in south central South America (or maybe here in the summer is their vacation?) is only surpassed by the Cliff Swallow. To assist them on their long journey, they have iron oxide in the bristles of their nasal passages that allow them to orient themselves with the Earth's magnetic field. They will stop in grain fields to re-energize along the way and are often considered pests by farmers. They go through a complete molt twice a year, which is rare for songbirds. This ensures their feathers are fresh and strong for their long migration.

According to the *Birds of Mon-*

tana, Bobolinks are uncommon to fairly common statewide in the breeding season, including being present here in the Flathead Valley. How many have you seen? Until last year I had never seen one here. Then I found one in downtown Whitefish in a postage stamp-sized lot in the middle of a subdivision singing on the one old post standing above the tall grass. How can such a conspicuous bird with a distinctive song be so difficult to find?

They have been reasonably adaptive when it comes to cohabitating with their two-legged invaders. Bobolinks prefer taller grasses and mixed prairie, but they will nest in hayfields and wet meadows which have increased with agriculture and clearing of forests.

They build cup nests on the ground, which are vulnerable to modern farming equipment. Consequently, like many grassland species in Montana, Bobolinks have declined

considerably in the last 50 years. Breeding Bird Survey results indicate an annual decline of 2.3% from 1966-2010. This decline has been partially blamed on more intensive farming practices that cut hay more frequently and earlier than in the past. Farmers formerly cut in late July or August, which allowed sufficient time for the young to fledge from their nests. In a trial conservation effort in Vermont, the public donated \$64,000 to 10 landowners to compensate the farmers for cutting later in the year.

Each one is a Bobo-link in a *chain*, which is actually the name used for a group of bobolinks. They are mentioned in many poems and are immortalized in the poem "Robert of Lincoln" by William Cullen Bryant which begins:

*Merrily swinging on brier and weed,
Near to the nest of his little dame,
Over the mountain-side or mead,
Robert of Lincoln is telling his name:
Bob-o'-link, bob-o'-link,
Spink, spank, spink;
Snug and safe is that nest of ours,
Hidden among the summer flowers.
Chee, chee, chee.*



Douglas Gimler, Cornell Lab of Ornithology



THE BIRDS OF NORTH AMERICA



March Program

Interpretation of Birds what they can tell us about the natural world presented by **Jim Robbins**

The Flathead Audubon Society will present Helena author Jim Robbins on March 11, 2019. His book, *The Wonder of Birds*, was the Montana Book Award winner for 2018. He'll talk about the bird-human relationship and how we can creatively interpret birds to tell us more about the natural world. The meeting will be at 7:00 PM in the Gateway West Community Room in Kalispell. It is free and open to the public.

Since 1980 Robbins has written for the *New York Times* and other publications on western issues, especially science and environmental stories.

He is the author of six books, including *The Man Who*

Planted Trees and A Symphony in the Brain. His books have been published in England, China, Norway, Australia and many other countries.

He has also written for *Audubon*, *Conde Nast Traveler*, *Smithsonian*, *Vanity Fair*, *The London Sunday Times*, *Conservation* and numerous other magazines. He has covered environmental stories across the US and in far flung places around the world, including Mongolia, Mexico, Chile, Peru, the Yanomami Territory of Brazil, Norway, Sweden and other countries.

For more information go to www.flatheadaudubon.org



Audubon Wolf Program Howls Again!



Because the weather was sending us a big storm, we had to cancel our February 11 Audubon meeting. To make up for missing a great wolf program from biologist Diane Boyd, Flathead Audubon, Flathead Wildlife and the North Fork Preservation Association are teaming up to bring the wolf program to you

on Thursday, March 7 at 7 PM in the Gateway Community Center, Room 26. Enter through Door C at the northeast corner of the building. As usual, check our website, www.FlatheadAudubon.org for any changes. You will also see publicity in the *Daily InterLake* and other media.

Education Committee News

Denny Olson, Conservation Educator, presented an ambassador training on January 7, 2019 at the Lone Pine State Park Visitors Center. Shannon Donaldson and her son Bridger Donaldson, Jennifer Dodan, Pat Jaquith and Pam Willison attended the three-hour workshop. FAS Education Committee members Amy Jacobs, Rod Walette and Gail Linne helped set up materials and were on hand for the afternoon activities.

Denny explained FAS's Educational Trunk program, and noted that the trunks are available for free for use with students of all ages, community groups and to members of senior facilities. The check-out procedure was described and participants learned how to check out trunks online on FAS's website.

He also presented a comprehensive overview of the Wetlands trunk, and provided several interactive activities about birds found in the wetlands. He introduced the newly developed Chickadee Trunk. Bridger delighted everyone when he modeled the Chickadee costume which is interchangeable with the four types of Chickadees included in the trunk's contents.

The four adults will join our Flathead Ambassador program. Their help introducing trunks, presenting contents, helping schools and community groups learn about the trunks and/or shuttling trunks to locations throughout the valley is invaluable.

Thank you and welcome, new Flathead Audubon Ambassadors.

by Gail Shay Linne, Education Chair



Conservation Educator's Niche

By Denny Olson

Big Possibilities for Local Bird Education

Partly because our local schools are cash-strapped for bus money, opportunities for public school outdoor education seem to be shrinking. With our local economy increasingly tied to outdoor experiences – and with what we know about how important natural outdoor experiences are in the intellectual and emotional development of children -- this is an alarming development. Flathead Audubon, the Flathead Land Trust, and Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks all seemed to come to this realization at the same time, so we have decided to partner and lay the groundwork for a potential (and partial) solution to this problem. Our ultimate goal is to find non-public funding to solve a situation that afflicts public schools facing drying-up budgets.

But first, we have to come up with a plan, in the form of a list of goals, specific measurable objectives and ultimate outcomes for our local students. Here's a summary of what we have so far.

We want to offer high-quality learning experiences (in-school presentations, learning trunks and especially, *field trips*) about local and accessible birds to Flathead Valley students. Why birds? Birds are found everywhere on the planet, are incredibly diverse, are critical to our survival through their roles in (a) pest control, (b) seed and pollen dispersal, (c) recycling death back into life, and they are high quality indicators of overall environmental health. Birds have inspired humans throughout history with their beauty, complex music and flight, and bird watching is a large and rapidly-growing portion of our outdoor recreation-based economy.

In addition, the Flathead's natural outdoors is integral to our quality of water, air, food, human life and enjoyment. Sound research has consistently shown that children and adults who spend significant time in nature are healthier, happier, and smarter. Familiarity with our home "place" is important to our health and happiness through a sense of belonging, and stimulates intelligence regarding making good decisions about our local area. We want to incorporate bird education into standard core science curriculum to give teachers an interesting, hands-on, unique way to teach concepts about biodiversity and ecosystems that incorporates outdoor field trips.

We want to teach students, through their own relationships with birds, about species diversity, adaptations, ecosystems, and how changes in habitats in ecosystems can lead to population changes, and how biodiversity is an indicator of ecosystem health. This can also expose them to a potentially fascinating lifelong recreational and learning activity – birding – one of the fastest-growing outdoor pursuits in the world.

Here's a sample of some of our learning ob-

jectives:

- Students will be able to name and show graphically five reasons why birds are important to them personally.
- Students will be able to relate at least fifteen species of Flathead Valley birds to specific local environments.
- Students will be able to explain why the availability of quality bird habitat affects their quality of life directly and indirectly.
- Students will be able to explain why healthy habitat and diverse bird populations will affect their own future economic well-being.
- Students will be able to explain three unique adaptations of birds in general (i.e., hollow bones, feathers, unique ears) and two other strategies for survival (i.e., flight and migration).
- With four educational trunks, three of which we will design and build (Sandhill Cranes, Ospreys, Chickadee Who's Who, Migratory Waterfowl), students will be able to (a) explain at least three anatomical adaptations for each species or group that enable them to thrive and (b) the habitat needs they have throughout the year (both locally and elsewhere, if migratory).
- Students will be able to explain bird diversity by demonstrating the nuances of bird field identification, and use binary species identification "keys" to show the characteristics (e.g. behavior, field marks), language and habitats of four kinds of Chickadees and / or waterfowl/water birds – (dabbling ducks, diving ducks, non-duck waterfowl, and Tundra / Trumpeter swans).
- In the field, students will be able to understand bird adaptations being used to help birds survive in their habitats and experience bird diversity by identifying key birds at the field trip site.
- Students will be able to explain why migratory stop-over places and migration corridors are so important to bird survival in their ecosystem and how small changes to habitat in one part of their migration journey can affect their survival.
- Students will gain a better understanding of their own "back yard", thereby showing them that many very accessible and nearby places have special value to wildlife and the quality of their own lives.

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WINTER/SPRING FIELD TRIPS FOR YOU!

All Flathead Audubon 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. Please read our field trip guidelines at www.FlatheadAudubon.org. 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. All drivers must have their own vehicle insurance. For more information, contact Kathy Ross at 837-3837 or Cory Davis at 257-3166, or the individual field trip leader listed below. Also, a free brochure, "Birding Hotspots of the Flathead" is available at the Flathead Audubon general meetings and on www.FlatheadAudubon.org.



FREEZOUT LAKE AND THE SNOW GEESE MIGRATION, March 23-24, 2019. The Snow Geese are moving from their California wintering grounds to their arctic nesting areas along with thousands of other waterfowl. There is nothing like Snow Geese and the Rocky Mountains at the same time and place. The place is Freezout Lake near Choteau; the time is the annual Flathead Audubon field trip. We will meet on Saturday morning at 10 AM, caravan/carpool to Choteau and arrive in time for the afternoon "fly-out." After spending a night in Choteau, we will head back out just before daybreak to watch the "mass ascension" of geese from the ponds of Freezout. After the morning's birding, we, too, will head home in the early afternoon arriving in Kalispell around 5 PM on Sunday. Bob Lee will provide a suggested schedule and route, and will be in the front of the group. Participants may choose to pursue the geese on their own as much or as little as they, the weather and the birds allow. Please make your own arrangements for lodging; primitive camping is available at Freezout WMA. Motel options include the Stage Stop (406-466-5900), Gunther (406-466-5444) and Big Sky (406-466-5318). Make your reservations early as these hotels will likely fill up. For more information, including the meeting location, contact Bob Lee at 270-0371 or RML3@centurytel.net.

SPRING MIGRATION IN THE LOWER FLATHEAD VALLEY WITH CRAIG HOHENBERGER, Sunday, March 31, 2019, 9 AM. Join premier birder Craig Hohenberger and Flathead Audubon exploring the sloughs, wetlands and back roads of the waterfowl-abundant south end of the Flathead Valley. With the diversity of habitat we should find Swans and most species of ducks, along with Bluebirds and other early migrant songbirds. And always raptors! To sign up for this great birding opportunity for folks of all ages and physical capabilities, contact Kathy at 837-3837 or mtkat67@gmail.com. Bring binoculars, spotting scopes, and appropriate clothing for changing spring conditions. Field trip is limited to 14 participants.

SPRING WATERFOWL AT THE WEST VALLEY PONDS, Saturday April 20, 9 AM-12:00 PM. We'll visit several ponds in the West Valley area including the new public bird viewing area that FAS is partnering with. We'll see lots of migrating waterfowl, and look for shorebirds, raptors, and early passerines. Roads will be both paved and gravel/dirt and this trip will be primarily driving. For details and to sign-up, contact Cory Davis (406) 257-3166 or piranga99@gmail.com. Trip is limited to 25 participants.

PHENOLOGY NOTE

Tundra Swans start to arrive at the north shore of Flathead Lake.

Nongame Wildlife Tax Check-off

When filling out your Montana tax form this year, think "wildlife" by donating to the Nongame Wildlife Program, found on Form 2, page 10, under Voluntary Contributions. If your taxes are prepared,



tell your accountant that you want to donate to wildlife! Your contributions are

tax deductible on next year's return. Look for the soaring Bald Eagle in the instruction booklet. Montana has more than 500 species of "nongame" animals that benefit from public support each year at tax time. Since 1983, the check-off has contributed over \$27,000 annually to this important wildlife program.



Grosswiler Award continued from page 1

When the dairy was at its highest production levels they had 700 milking cows. The family has also grazed 600 to 1,000 beef cattle on their land. Over time, the family has been selling portions of their land including what is now Rebecca Farms and land immediately west of Kalispell Kidsport which is now in the city limits of Kalispell and is being developed into housing. The Grosswiler family still farms 1,379 acres in the West Valley.

Because of these strong ties to the land, the family wanted to preserve their agricultural legacy by keeping some of their farmland intact and allowing for future agricultural production. Tanner said "continuing farming in my great-grandpa's honor is very meaningful to me, but more so, to know my children can con-

tinue that tradition so we will have multiple generations living his legacy is incredible." The family's legacy will also live on forever in the eyes of school children as the public bird viewing area will serve as an educational site for local schools as it is ideally situated only about two miles from the city of Kalispell and close to 26 schools including the Flathead Valley Community College.

The Flathead Audubon Society thanks the Grosswiler family for conserving such a special place in the Flathead and the gift of the bird viewing area for the public. It will be appreciated for generations to come!
by Laura Katzman

Cons. Ed. Niche continued from page 4

- Students will be able to explain the economic and environmental value of protected open space, wetlands and riparian areas, and express some understanding that the future of open protected areas is directly tied to their own civic and everyday behavior.

The field trip portions of these sequences are the most important part of the Unit. The overall goal of the Partners is to re-acquaint students with their natural surroundings. It bears repeating that students who

play and learn outdoors in natural surroundings develop into healthier, happier and smarter adults.

Many people live in this grand place we call the Flathead because of outdoor recreational opportunities. Our role is to also remind our future citizens that these wonderful surroundings also offer opportunities to *learn* as well as *recreate* (or do both at once). Our outdoors is one of the highest quality "classrooms" on this Planet. We should take advantage. In fact, we are starting to just that, and we'll keep you posted.

GLACIER NATIONAL PARK CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT RESULTS

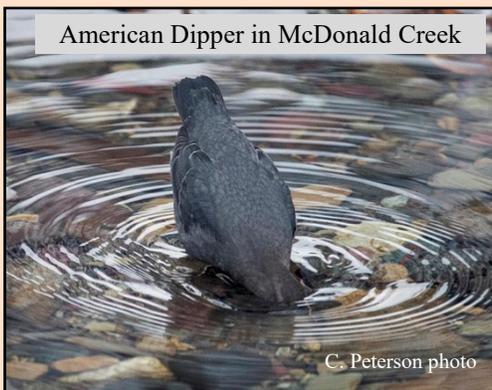
Glacier National Park (GNP) held its annual Christmas Bird Count (CBC) on Sunday, December 16, 2018. Thirty participants contributed to this event by covering 10 different routes in Glacier and 1 bird feeder in West Glacier. Participants spent the day counting all bird species and individuals detected. The weather was unusually mild for a winter bird count in Glacier with temperatures just below freezing, little to no wind and such little snow that observers walked, rather than skied most routes. Nearly all water was open (not frozen).

Routes varied considerably in 2018, with the number of species and birds detected: some routes very quiet, and others quite active. Overall, it was a big year, with 41 different species and 2,497 individuals counted. This was six times more than the number of birds counted in 2017! The Bohemian Waxwing was our most abundant species with 1,309 individuals counted. This was followed by Pine Siskins and Common Redpolls (Table 1). Mixed in with the Bohemians, astute observers recognized a new species for Glacier's CBC: Cedar Waxwings with 55 individuals

counted. A short video helped us to confirm and estimate the number of Cedar Waxwings in one of the flocks.

The CBC in 2018 was most notable because of the record high counts of seven different species: American Robin, Black-backed Woodpecker, Bohemian Waxwing, Canada (Gray) Jay, Northern Flicker, Pileated Woodpecker, and Red-breasted Nuthatch (Table 1). As in 2017, observers spotted a rare (for winter) Red-necked Grebe on the open waters of Lake McDonald. No additional species were detected during count week (3 days before and 3 days after count day).

Glacier's CBC which started in 1962, contributed to the 119th year of the National Audubon Society's CBC. Thanks to all participants for contributing their expertise, time and energy for this annual event. Your efforts are invaluable in tracking long-term changes in species abundance, diversity and range changes in Glacier and throughout North America. *by Lisa Bate*



American Dipper in McDonald Creek

C. Peterson photo

Volunteers needed for OSNA Monitoring

2019 OSNA Volunteer Monitoring begins this month!

Reports from Volunteer Monitors underpin Flathead Audubon's management of OSNA. The reports give our OSNA On-the-Ground Manager up-to-date information on maintenance needs at Owen Sowerwine. They provide observational data that feeds into our records of what birds and wildlife and native vegetation are present at Owen Sowerwine. In addition, Volunteer Monitors relay feedback from OSNA visitors and neighbors that helps us improve our management of the Area.

Volunteer Monitors record their OSNA observations on the OSNA Volunteer Monitoring Form which has check boxes and questions that help you know what to look for. You can print the Form from the FAS website (look under Conservation for OSNA) or pick it up at any FAS meeting. The completed Form is sent to Kay Mitchell (address on the form).

If you haven't been to OSNA before, you can find information about how to get there, and also a trail map of the Area, on the FAS website. There is also a free brochure with the most recent OSNA bird list and an aerial trail map available at the OSNA kiosk inside the Treasure Lane entrance.

You don't have to sign up to be a Volunteer Monitor. Just take the Monitoring Form along when you go OSNA, fill out the parts that pertain to the plac-

es you visit, and send it in.

Another way to volunteer is to sign up to do a scheduled visit. We try to insure a regular flow of information by scheduling someone to do a monitoring visit every half month. Scheduled volunteers also use the regular Monitoring Form to report their observations. Check the OSNA part of our website for more information on scheduled visits and how to sign up. Or contact Linda Winnie at lindawin626@gmail.com or 406-755-1406.

THANK YOU to all who have served as Volunteer Monitors over the years. Your help has been invaluable! Please let me know if you are able to help again this year.

from Linda Winnie, Co-Chair, Owen

Sowerwine Committee.



Montana Audubon Legislative Update – we are almost half-way through!

We made it! The first month and a half of the 2019 legislative session just flew by! We have been in the halls of the capital every day talking to legislators, and our efforts have been reflected: we have testified on 32 bills (supporting 18 and opposing 14), hosted an MSU class for a small lobby day, worked with legislators to amend a few bills, and contributed to the public lands rally. And what a turnout this year! The capital facility staff estimated it to be over 1,600 public land advocates. And while we have these achievements to share with you, we must keep working hard every day.

This session has been no different than past years, and unfortunately that means we have been playing a lot of defense. There are continued attacks on state water quality, predators - especially wolves, clean energy advances, and climate change action. On top of that, unfortunately, most of the sensible solutions and proactive legislation we have supported has been tabled: reducing styrofoam, single-use plastic straws, and plastic bags, re-siting of pipelines,

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CHIRPS & SQUAWKS

- ◆ Both Hawk Watch and the Education Committee will be wrapping up work and reports for 2018; after which the planning for the 2019 seasons will continue in earnest.
- ◆ Denny Olson, joined by Flathead Land Trust and Montana FWP, is proceeding on work to create Sandhill Crane and Osprey education trunks and a school field trip program to utilize the West Valley Viewing and Own Sowerwine Natural Areas. Two-thumbs up!
- ◆ Speaking of Owen Sowerwine, the lease is up for renewal and several options will be considered when that committee convenes the end of the week.
- ◆ Maryland Pannell submitted her resignation from the Board. We thank her for her service and know she will be missed at our meetings. Pam Willison was appointed to replace her.
- ◆ Bob Lopp was appointed as the alternate representative for the MT Audubon Board.
- ◆ Other items discussed included field trips, logos, native plantings at West Valley, insurance, investments, and improved efforts by Montana Audubon to keep us informed on public policy and legislation.

2019 Wings Across the Big Sky Bird Festival

Online registration will begin in early March 2019: stay tuned!

Montana Audubon will host its 20th annual *Wings Across the Big Sky* bird festival at the Cottonwood Inn, in Glasgow on June 7-9, 2019! This longstanding, community event celebrates Montana's native bird species and typically draws hundreds of wildlife enthusiasts from across the state and beyond. For 2019 the festival lead sponsor is American Prairie Reserve (APR).

Numerous field trips are in the works that highlight the remarkable grassland habitats of Montana's highline. The keynote address will be presented on Friday evening by Sean Gerrity,

American Prairie Reserve founder, who will discuss the importance of the project to Montana's grassland birds and other grassland species.

There are many other fun activities to choose from at *Wings Across the Big Sky* including a Saturday evening banquet, Montana Audubon's annual conservation awards, "Nature Adventure Tour" silent auction, "Cakes for Conservation" fundraiser and more. For more information, visit the "Outreach" section of Montana Audubon's website: www.mtaudubon.org or call 406.443.3949.

Legislative Update continued from page 7

and reducing greenhouse gas emissions. Fortunately, attacks on the Greater Sage-Grouse Stewardship Act have not materialized. Here are a few of the worst bills we have been fighting.

HB 265, introduced by Kerry White (R-Bozeman), inserts politics into Montana Fish, Wildlife and Park's (FWP) process of deciding to purchase conservation easements.

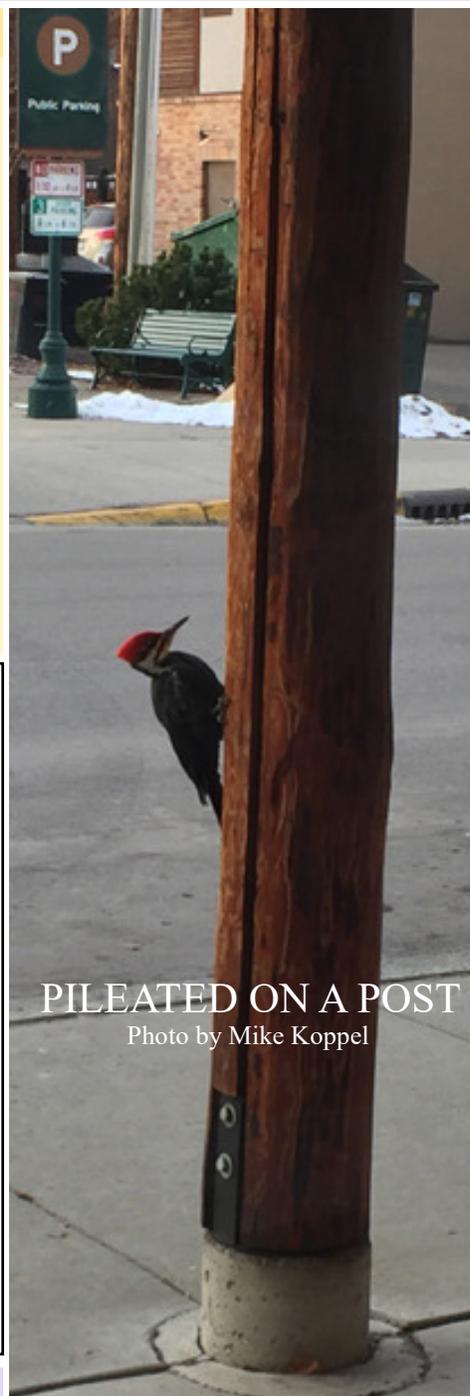
HB 279, introduced by Bob Brown (R-Thompson Falls), would allow licensed, "ethical" trappers to trap wolves and then be reimbursed with private funds for costs incurred during harvest.

HB 332, sponsored by Rep. Josh Kassmier (R - Fort Benton), would give county com-

missioners authority over the transport of wild bison, or wild buffalo within the state.

Those are just a few. There is much more to come, and we will stay focused on our top priorities: Protecting our most important resource: water; Fighting against legislation that would negatively impact Habitat Montana; Securing funding for better wildlife and habitat management; Fighting anti-wolf and predator regulations.

We will continue sending "Action Alerts" asking you to contact your Representative or Senator on key bills. If you have any questions, feel free to reach out to Amy Seaman or Wyatt Smith at MT Audubon. *by Amy Seamon*



PILEATED ON A POST

Photo by Mike Koppel

Another New Species for OSNA Bird List!

Last month we announced that 2 new species had been discovered at Owen Sowerwine, both by Jake Bramante. Turns out Jake was not yet finished with new species. On January 16 he was prowling around OSNA again when a Swamp Sparrow flitted up over to a stump to join a Song Sparrow. This was just south of the Montessori School along the Stillwater River - so inside the Natural Area. Jake went back down to OSNA the next day with some friends and this time they saw two Swamp Sparrows. A short video of one of them can be viewed on the

Flathead Audubon Facebook page.

So - *another* species to add to the OSNA Bird List! The newly updated list is available at www.flatheadaudubon.org in the OSNA section (under Conservation). This brings the number of species on the list to 149. Better get down to OSNA soon if you want to discover number 150!



Jake Bramante



Thank You!

...to those below who have made donations to Flathead Audubon through January 2019.

Kestrel
Philip R. Iversen



rspb.org.uk



granderie.ca

My Own Vision
Jan B. James

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

Please make checks payable to:
Flathead Audubon Society
P.O. Box 9173
Kalispell, MT 59904
Your gift is tax deductible.

Olympic Peninsula April 12-14, 2019
BirdFest
Come bird with us!

- ▣ San Juan Island Cruise
- ▣ Neah Bay Birding Excursion
- ▣ Guided Birding Trips
- ▣ Bird Art Classes
- ▣ Photography Workshop
- ▣ NAS Photography Exhibit
- ▣ Auction & Raffle
- ▣ Gala Banquet with Speaker:
John Marzluff

Located in Sequim, WA
For more information:
www.olympicbirdfest.org
info@olympicbirdfest.org
or 360-681-4076

DUNGENESS RIVER Audubon CENTER
at Railroad Bridge Park
FUNDRAISER

Researching and Conserving Pollinators

"Bumblebees: Conserving Pollinators", a presentation by Tabitha Graves, USGS Research Ecologist, will be featured at the next meeting of the Flathead Chapter of Montana Native Plant Society. The meeting will be March 20, 7 PM, North Valley Community Hall, 235 Nucleus Ave, Columbia Falls.

Graves will talk about her research on bumblebees in the northwest, and recent efforts to monitor and research pollinators, including western bumblebees.

GET THE PILEATED POST BY EMAIL!

Find us on: **facebook**®

Be sure to check flatheadaudubon.org for

Late breaking FAS news and announcements
Online FAS membership sign up or renewal
Latest eBird reports on species being observed in the Flathead area



1510118 www.btwsearch.com



Clipartfest.com



Newsletter of the Flathead Audubon Society

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

March 2019

Flying Squirrel



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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 Gateway Community Center, US Hwy 2 West, Kalispell. Both meetings are open to all.

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: lindawin626@gmail.com. Deadline for newsletter copy is the 18th of each month. Contact newsletter editor at 755-1406; email submissions to: lindawin626@gmail.com

Website: www.FlatheadAudubon.org

Conservation Educator - Denny Olson: auduboneducator@gmail.com

FLATHEAD AUDUBON SOCIETY DIRECTORY

OFFICERS

Table with 4 columns: Position, Name, Email, Phone. Includes President Kay Mitchell, Vice-President Gael Bissell, Secretary Marylane Pannell, and Treasurer Joe Batts.

DIRECTORS

Table with 4 columns: Term, Name, Email, Phone. Lists directors from 2016-2019 to 2018-2019.

COMMITTEE CHAIRS

Table with 3 columns: Committee, Name, Phone. Lists chairs for Conservation, Education, Field Trips, Finance, Donations, Hospitality, Membership, and Nominations.

Table with 3 columns: Committee, Name, Phone. Lists chairs for Owen Sowerwine, Linda Winnie, Natural Area, Newsletter, Program, Publicity, Sales, Refuges, and Website.

MONTANA AUDUBON

P.O. Box 595, Helena, MT 59624 443-3949 www.MTAudubon.org
Executive Director: Larry Berrin lberrin@mtaudubon.org
Board Member representing FAS, Bob Lee rml3@centurytel.net 270-0371
Bob Lopp, alternate boblopp@bresnan.net 250-7753

FLATHEAD AUDUBON SOCIETY Membership Individual or Family

- Basic Membership \$25
Supporting Membership \$40
Additional Donation of \$
To: Education Fund, Owen Sowerwine Fund, Wherever needed

Total \$

You may renew or join online on our website: http://www.flatheadaudubon.org/

The Pileated Post is sent to FAS members by email. If you wish to receive a paper copy by USPS, check this box.

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