the Pileated Post
Newsletter of the Flathead Audubon Society

September 2019
VOLUME 44, NUMBER 1

President's Column

Welcome to our first issue of the Pileated Post for this next Flathead Audubon season! I am excited if not bit nervous taking the helm after one incredible Kay Mitchell. Wasn't she amazing? So organized, knew all your names, served on every committee, and led our Chapter through historic growth and successes such as helping develop our first website, establishing highly organized newsletter and budgeting processes, administering the Jewel Basin Hawk Watch agreements, taking full aim at Owen Sowerwine Natural Area (OSNA) weed infestations, helping expand our Birds of Prey Festival, working with many new grantors, and raising a whopping $15,000 for West Valley. Last year we broke our membership record with 418 total members.

This year, we are rolling out some exciting new changes such as an updated and more easily used logo, procuring new FAS merch, creating a membership card with perks such as discounts for bird seed, and lining out our new partnership with Flathead Land Trust on bird education at several new bird viewing areas. We will also be kicking off the OSNA outdoor classroom program. As many of you know, we only are able to accomplish all of these great community programs, field trips, public meetings, Birds of Prey Festival, Jewel Basin Hawk Watch and other projects with the incredible dedication of our all-volunteer board, the incredible talent of Denny Olson, our Conservation/Education Coordinator, and the help of at least 20-30 dedicated volunteers.

Sooooo, if you have not yet experienced volunteerism with FAS, now is your chance. People tell me it's rather addicting. Big or small, there are many opportunities from weed pulling and trail work at Owen Sowerwine, to helping with Birds of Prey Festival, to serving on one or our committees like Conservation, Membership, Hospitality, Grants, or Education. For those interested in education, we are beginning to develop our volunteer base for the Owen Sowerwine Outdoor Classroom. If you would like to get more information or sign up as a volunteer, contact one of the board members or Committee folks via the contact information at the end of this newsletter or visit with us at our general meetings. Oh and thanks to all our past awesome volunteers!

by Gael Bissell, President

MEMBERS WITH BENEFITS!

Flathead Audubon local members are hitting the big time this year. When you renew your membership in the local chapter or join for the first time, you will get a membership card. You can flash your card around to impress people AND you can use your card for discounts at specific local stores. For instance, Murdoch's will give you a 10% discount on bags of black oil sunflower seeds, when you show your card at the register.

Find a list of discounts on the FAS website: **https://www.FlatheadAudubon.org**. These benefits are only good for members of our local chapter. If you are a member of National Audubon, please be sure also to join Flathead Audubon to enjoy these benefits. And please be sure to tell these businesses that you appreciate their generosity. *by Kay Mitchell*

SEPTEMBER FLATHEAD AUDUBON CALENDAR

Monday, September 3, 2019. 5:30 PM. FAS Board of Directors Meeting, Gael Bissell's home, Kalispell. All welcome.

Monday, September 9, 2019. 7 PM. Flathead Audubon General Meeting, Gateway Community Center, US Hwy 2 West, Kalispell. All welcome. See page 3.

See the Flathead Audubon website (http://www.flatheadaudubon.org) for any scheduled field trips in September.

BIRD OF THE MONTH

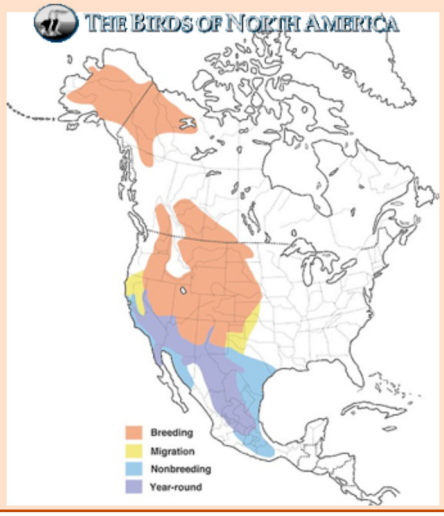
Say's Phoebe

by John Hughes

Perched on a fence post, rock or exposed tree branch, in plain sight, is a good place to find a Say's Phoebe when in a locale where they are present. A medium-sized chunky flycatcher, the Say's Phoebe (*Sayornis saya*) is named for Thomas Say an early American Naturalist. The bird was first described on an expedition to the Rocky Mountains, 1819-20, in which Say served as the expedition zoologist. Say's Phoebes have gray backs, heads, throat and breast. Their upper wings appear pale gray in flight. They have a distinctly black tail, which they dip in typical phoebe fashion. Their belly is a pale rufous color becoming more orange on the undertail coverts.

Say's Phoebes prefer open country where they sally forth in flycatcher like fashion to catch insects and return to their perch to eat. Most of their sorties are short with direct flight unless they are in hot pursuit of an insect. They typically hunt close to the ground. It is not uncommon to see them hovering like a Kestrel. Frequently, they will glean insects from shrubs and other foliage or the ground by hovering above the substrate. Their prey consists mostly of insects. Grasshoppers, bees, crickets, caterpillars, butterflies, flies, beetles and wasps top the list. Interestingly, they seem to avoid honeybees. Typically, they do not drink, obtaining their water from the arthropods they consume.

Say's Phoebes arrive in Montana probably in late April to early May and migrate south in early August. They are considered short to medium range migrants, however some travel from central California to the northern parts of Alaska. The Say's Phoebe breeds farther north than any other flycatcher. This species winters throughout the southwestern parts of the U.S. into Mexico, and is a permanent resident in the southwestern part of the country. While paired up and considered monogamous during the breeding season, they are mostly solitary at other times of the year.



Males arrive on breeding territories before females, and pairing occurs soon after the female arrives. The male will visit potential nest sites and display for the female by fluttering in arcs and hovering above the site while vocalizing. Natural nest sites are usually covered cliff ledges, hollows, or caves. Say's Phoebes will also use other bird's nests – particularly swallows. They will also readily use human structures such as barns or abandoned buildings, where they build nests on rafters and ledges. Nests consist of a cup made primarily of dry vegetative materials and lined with hair, paper, wool and feathers. Little to no mud is used during nest construction, presumably because they don't usually nest near water.

Upon completion of the nest, typically four to five ovate, white eggs are laid. Females incubate the eggs for approximately 15 days, and the young fledge and leave the nest in about 17 days. The young are fed a diet of insects. After a period of about three days, the young disperse from the nest area.

The Say's Phoebe is listed as a species of least concern. They have benefited from the construction of human-made structures used for nesting sites. Habitat loss remains the greatest concern for this species with some populations showing declines.

As indicated on the map, the Flathead area is right on the fringe of this species distribution, but they are around if you know where to look. No trip to Lost Trails National Wildlife Refuge was complete without stopping in at the headquarters building and checking out the tops of the fence posts near the historic barn. I was usually rewarded with a sighting of a Say's Phoebe. Now that I reside in Southeastern Arizona, where Say's Phoebes are permanent residents, you might think I would become a little less interested in spotting one, but that wouldn't be true. It is always like bumping into an old friend whenever I see one, and it is fun to watch them fly a few fence posts ahead and wait for me to catch up.

September Program

Birds of Bolivia and Chile

presented by **Joshua Covill**

Flathead Audubon will offer an informational program featuring local bird expert Joshua Covill on Monday, September 9 from 7- 9 PM in the Gateway West Community Meeting Room in Kalispell. He and his wife spent 5 months in South America exploring their passion for birds. They hiked volcanos, trekked the stone paths laid by the Inca Empire and birded along the way. The program will feature photos of South American iconic birds such as toucans, penguins, hummingbirds, and flamingos and more.

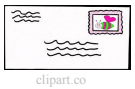
Joshua has been working as a photo and videographer developing birding promotion programs with bj Worth. He is also the eBird reviewer for Lake and Sanders County.

The program is free and open to the public.

For more information, visit the Flathead Audubon website: **www.flatheadaudubon.org**

RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP NOW!

Please renew your membership in Flathead Audubon as soon as possible. For those who don't renew by October 18, this will be the last issue of the Pileated Post they will receive. Don't miss an issue of our very interesting newsletter! The FAS Board proposed and the membership voted in 2017 to raise the membership dues a bit to cover increased expenses. The dues now are $25 for a basic membership and $40 for a supporting membership. This year we really need support for our excellent education program. We are the only organization in the Flathead Valley which offers free environmental education.



For those who join or renew memberships in National Audubon, note that they no longer will accept checks at the New York address. You must either use the envelope sent to you when requesting you to renew or to use the internet at **http://www.audubon.org/renew.**

When you renew your Flathead Audubon membership please include your email address. We would like to compile a list of members email addresses so we can send occasional notifications of events or important news.

by Mike Fanning

BIRDATHON 2019

Thanks to Cory Davis and Will Beyer, the 2019 Bird-a-thon was a great success. They did the heavy lifting and provided excellent leadership! Receipts to date are $1,310 and more pledges will come in as we get closer to September and much of our birding will slow down.

As Cory reported, "Saturday, June 15th started with a beautiful morning of partly cloudy skies and ideal summer temperatures, resulting in a wonderful birding day for Flathead Audubon's seventh annual Bird-a-thon. Members of the Jays and the Tanagers searched mostly closer to home this year to see and hear as many species as possible in one day. The furthest excursion went only as far as the Mission Valley, otherwise we stuck to favorite haunts in the Flathead such as Swan River Refuge, Smith Lake, Tally Lake, and Glacier National Park." Highlight for me was seeing a Smith Lake Bald Eagle dive for a fish just 20 feet in front of me!

Cory continued, "It was a close competition this year, but the Jays pulled out a two-species victory over the Tanagers, 130-128 .Both teams had five birding teams with varying birding skills, from beginner to expert. The top team spent 18 hours covering probably 200 miles. But the day wasn't just about being in the natural environment and searching for bird species. The goal was, also, to raise money for Flathead Audubon." Thanks to all of you who participated by birding and fund raising! *by Bob Lopp*

Honoring Butch and Buzz, The Osprey Twins Doug and Don MacCarter receive Conservation Achievement Recognition

"We were in 9th or 10th grade, says Doug "Butch" MacCarter, the just five-minute older twin brother of Don "Buzz" MacCarter, and we rode our bikes, as we did most every day since Kindergarten, to the rim rocks above Billings." It was 1958-59. "Our goal was to find reptiles and amphibians and bring them home. Our Dad had built these high quality wooden structures for these critters in our basement. That day we found a bull snake with four odd small legs that we later described and sent into the Billings Gazette", tells Doug. It was after this simple event that the lives of these two curious energetic twins changed. Upon reading this article, they got a call from a famous European falconer, D. J. Nelson, who lived in Billings and wanted to see this odd creature. Doug and Don took the snake over to D.J.'s home where, as Doug puts it, "the place was like a museum - tons of mounts, photographs from around the world, dead sea scrolls, and most incredibly, live birds of prey in the back yard!". Once they met Sutan, a 20-lb gorgeous prize-winning European golden eagle who D.J. had trained for professional falconry, they asked "can we learn from you?"

These boys then decided falconry and everything birds of prey would be their future. D.J. helped them train a female Northern harrier named Kima and soon the twins were using 100-yard long tethers at the local football field first exercising and then finally releasing Kima as a newly trained bird.

Through high school, the twins trained and cared for red-tailed hawks, prairie falcons, and kestrels. After graduation, they headed to the University of Montana to continue their wildlife education in part because of the Craighead brothers who also had a passion for birds of prey and kept wild raptors at the University for education and rehabilitation. The MacCarter brothers quickly took over much of the care for these wild birds. They also began working with Jay Sumner surveying peregrine falcon eyries across Montana. It was right after high school that Don MacCarter, who had asked for his first camera for high school graduation, began his path to become an outstanding and renowned wildlife photographer.

Their birds of prey passions, the profound effects of Rachael Carson's book Silent Spring, coupled with national attention to declining reproductive rates of bald eagles and osprey that lead Butch and Buzz to pursue graduate degrees by studying food habits and population dynamics of osprey on Flathead Lake based at the Flathead Lake Biological Station. Their research began in 1966 and continued through post-graduate work to1976. They published some of the first research results on the decline of western populations of osprey associated with egg shell thinning and pesticide contamination from chemicals such as DDT likely being used in the surrounding cherry orchards or farms. DDT was finally banned in 1972.

After Flathead Lake research wound down, the brothers forged similar but different wildlife careers with one thing in common: wildlife and education. Don taught high school science and wildlife classes for 17 years in Lakeville MN before moving to Santa Fe, NM to become head of the "Division of Chief of Public Affairs" with the state's wildlife agency. Don was their main photographer and oversaw all of the New Mexico Game and Fish Agency's education programs. Because he was particularly skilled at wildlife observations, he also undertook many of the agency's helicopter surveys of bighorn sheep, waterfowl, and big game. Don and his wife, Jane, retired to "Paradise" Valley in 2005 where he focused primarily on wildlife photography and fly fishing until his courageous battle with cancer ended in 2018.

Doug also pursued high school education first in MN and then, in 1978, Scottsdale AZ where he taught advanced wildlife biology, animal behavior, anatomy and physiology at their local high school (lucky students). He was associated with the Liberty Wildlife Rehabilitation Center where he helped not only with birds of prey rehabilitation and releases after injures but also training birds for public education and training young students/volunteers on how to care for and handle birds of prey and give their own public programs. He obtained his pilot's license and flew with the Civil Air Patrol all over AZ to pick up injured birds and bring them back to Liberty. Doug also taught scuba diving to students with disabilities. Doug also "retired" around 2005 where he started to spend more of his summers in the Flathead eventually working

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Conservation Educator's Niche

By Denny Olson

Well, we are nearing the end of that chronically over-planned, not-enough-time-in-the-universe-as-we-understand-it, time we call "summer". And I have to say … it has been fun! Five weeks of teaching senior citizens about birds and life in Glacier, four days of Audubon and Road Scholar grandparents and grandkids with talented FAS volunteers, many Glacier Institute classes, and planning with Flathead Land Trust and Fish Wildlife and Parks for a large bird education initiative to be started this school year, working on Sandhill Crane and Osprey educational trunks – was just a start!

In order to get ready for 5th and 7th graders culminating their bird education sequences this coming year, Flathead Audubon had to do some "infrastructure" work on our gem of a field trip location, Owen Sowerwine Natural Area. What I have discovered about our membership – besides their intellectual prowess and big hearts --- is that we can do some darn hard physical work as well. Board Members Rod Wallette and Pam Willison helped cover our entire OSNA mainland area with 16 evenly-spaced plot-point posts, getting the area ready for future plant and bird diversity science work by our local students. Rick Mace loaned his boat, and himself, to help put up six waterfowl nest boxes on the Stillwater River and Big Slough in OSNA. Students will begin a monitoring project on comparative use of boxes with different entrance hole shapes and sizes next spring.

Pam, Rod, myself and new Board Member Will Beyer, carved a new primitive interpretive trail in the north section of OSNA. It is about a mile-long loop, complete with metal trail markers and overlook side trails to observe Osprey and waterfowl nests at an un-disturbing distance. New signage posts delineate where private land begins and OSNA land ends. Last year, we put up a high boardwalk entrance to our north outdoor classroom area to effectively provide reliable access for students around old spring-flooded river channels.

Access to that area – along with bus turnaround for dropping off public school students -- is being generously provided by The Kalispell Montessori School and landowners Terry and Sally Welder. The Memorandum of Understanding we have with them, along with the License for Management we have with the Department of Natural Resources and Conservation (DNRC), is a model for private-public-nonprofit three-way cooperation. It is based on a very simple premise of caring for our kids and for the land that they will inherit.

Still to come, as an extension of the black cottonwood regeneration study done by Flathead High School students in 2017, we will be erecting a couple to whitetail deer exclosures to have students test the effects of browsing on new cottonwood seedlings. The seedling crop is improving dramatically because of our efforts at invasive herb and shrub removal – which of course promises to be a yearly effort.

Sometime this fall, I will be offering a show-and tell of all of these efforts on an all-trails field trip in OSNA. I might even include some bird calls.

CHIRPS & SQUAWKS

Highlights from the May 2019 Board meeting

- The year end financial reports were reviewed, and the 2019-20 budget was approved.
- Thirteen Bluebird boxes were installed at or near the West Valley viewing area by a crew from Flathead Audubon.
- Work is underway on the Birds of Prey Festival this coming September. Coffee Traders is a new sponsor, Whitefish Credit Union has donated money, and a grant application has been submitted to the Maki Foundation.
- There will be some new members on the management team for Owen Sowerwine Natural Area. Kay Mitchell and Pam Willison will be assuming the duties that Linda Winnie has been fulfilling for many years (many thanks for those many years Linda!).
- The Education Program Strategic Plan for the coming year has been completed, and it will be a busy year working with the public at various events, and using the resources of Owen Sowerwine for education programs for school-age kids. Denny Olson outlined plans for infrastructure work to be completed in Owen Sowerwine during the summer, including creating 2 deer exclosures, placing 16 plot point posts, installing 6 duck houses, and creating the new trail to the outdoor classroom area.

May 2019 General Meeting

The 2019 General Meeting of Flathead Audubon Society was held on May 13 in Whitefish, and was called to order by President Kay Mitchell. Kay provided a summary of a very successful and active past year for FAS including: having the highest annual membership to date, participating in 6 Christmas Bird Counts, completing the fall Hawk Watch, giving 3 Conservation Achievement Recognition awards, holding 9 excellent monthly programs (several standing room only!), generating 13 comment letters related to conservation and science issues, experiencing a 20% increase of attendance to the Birds of Prey Festival, reaching over 4500 people through our Education program, maintaining an amazing and information-packed website, and recording over 8700 hours of volunteer work by the Board members and Officers of FAS.

Treasurer Joe Batts gave a report on current account balances, and mentioned the $150 of new memberships received at the door. Kay reminded people that it's important to join your local Audubon chapter, which is a different membership than state or national memberships.

Bob Lee, Chair of the nomination committee, introduced the Officer and Board candidates. They are: Gael Bissell for President and Cory Davis for Vice President, and Will Beyer, Margaret Parodi, and David Manuwal as Board members. The nominees were accepted through motion and vote.

Bob Lopp paid tribute to Kay Mitchell for her past 4 years of service as the FAS President. Kay guided us through many improvements and expansions of programs, and maintained reliable financial management. Kay received several parting gifts and a standing ovation. Incoming President Gael Bissell received the official gavel and the meeting was adjourned. The silent auction brought in $399.

Dan Casey treated the crowd to an amazing set of pictures and details of his birding trip to the African Country of Ghana.

by Pam Willison

PROJECT FEEDERWATCH

Do you like to watch birds? Are you looking for a classroom or nature club project? How about participating in a project that contributes to scientific understanding of changes in wintering areas of birds? Project FeederWatch may be just for you. This year will be my third year for this important project. Since I feed birds and enjoy watching them come to my feeders, this was a no brainer. Also, it is fun to see how many different species I can bring into the yard by offering a variety of food. I found that my identification skills became more focused; that I observed more infrequent visitors, and that spending more time watching my feeders captured rare bird interactions. It was a very rewarding experience, and I highly recommend it.

Project FeederWatch is a citizen science project that began in Ontario, Canada in the mid-1970s and partnered with Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology ten years later. It is a winter-long project starting in November and ending mid-April, in which participants periodically count birds at backyard feeders, birdbaths or other local areas with plantings that attract birds. Designed to help scientists track broad-scale movements of winter bird populations and long-term trends in bird distribution and abundance, this is the perfect project for anyone who likes birds or wants to learn more about birds.

No particular skill level or background is necessary to participate in the project. Participants will receive a research kit and resources to help attract and identify common winter species including an interactive tool that allows participants to learn about the food and feeder preference of nearly 100 species and how to predict which birds can be attracted to an area. All you have to do is watch your feeder, birdbath or designated area as much or as little as you like, record what you see, and send in your data. There is an $18 fee for U.S. citizens ($15 for Cornell Lab members) necessary to analyze the data. Along with the research kit, you will receive a year-end report each fall and have access to Cornell's digital version of *Living Bird*.

The data gathered by people like you will only become more important as predicted changes in climate continue to occur. Check out **www.FeederWatch.org** where you will find information on joining and access to a free on-line bird identification guide. You can also read about other people's experience since joining FeederWatch.

by John Hughes

Congratulations to June Ash!

June Ash, longtime member and supporter of Flathead Audubon, turned 90 on March 19. She celebrated her birthday surrounded by family and friends. In the spring a delegation from FAS visited her to bring her congratulations and best wishes from Flathead Audubon, and spent a lively afternoon talking about birds and conservation and politics.

Many Flathead Audubon members remember June and her husband Rod with affection and appreciation. June and Rod were active participants in FAS for over 20 years after they retired to their home in the Swan Valley in 1984, and June continues to be a member. Beginning in the late 1980s, June served on the FAS Board of Directors for 10 years and as FAS Membership Chair for 13 years, and she and Rod headed up Flathead Audubon's Bird Seed Sale program for 17 years. June and Rod were centrally involved in growing Montana Audubon from its beginnings, when it consisted of one part-time legislative lobbyist working out a borrowed office, to a thriving conservation organization with several full-time employees based in its office in Helena. After Rod passed away in 2006, Flathead Audubon instituted an annual "Raptor Day in Honor of Rod Ashe" at Lone Pine State Park, funded in part by Art Ortenberg, who was a longtime friend of June and Rod. June was the guest of honor at these celebrations, and spoke about Rod and their conservation work together, and about the critical importance of conservation. This event later became known as Flathead Audubon's annual Birds of Prey Festival.

Congratulations, June, and Happy Birthday, from all your Flathead Audubon friends. And thank you for your conservation work in the Swan and the Flathead, and your many years of service to Flathead Audubon and Montana Audubon.

June now resides at Heritage House in Kalispell. When the FAS delegation visited in the spring, she asked us to pass along this message to her FAS friends: "I'm doing fine here. Remember that life is as good as you make it. I'm glad to see Flathead Audubon continuing its conservation and nature education work with such energy and dedication. The world needs this kind of passion and devotion to Conservation. Keep up the good work!" June loves to have visitors, so don't be shy about dropping in to see her.

by Linda Winnie

The legacy of Jim Jokerst

We lost a loyal and talented Audubon member this past winter. Jim Jokerst, renowned West Glacier artist, generously donated his time and talent to organizations, like ours, that promote appreciation and conservation of wildlife and their habitats. In his memory, Jim's wife Gail has donated some of his inspiring wildlife books to Flathead Audubon. The intent is that these treasured books will be distributed to schools and other locations where they will encourage others to cherish our natural heritage as Jim did.

by Linda de Kort

photo by Gail Joker

Natural Events To See This Month: Sandhill Crane flocks arrive in the West Valley area near ponds with surrounding grain fields.

FALL 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 471-3314, 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**. Check the FAS webpage (**https://www.flatheadaudubon.org/activities-and-field-trips/**) for updated information on field trips.

Upcoming field trips will be listed here as they become available for future months. If any become available in September they will be listed on the website and announced at the general meeting.

MacCarter twins, continued from page 4

with Wild Wings, Flathead Audubon, and once again monitoring osprey populations with Rick Mace on Flathead Lake and Flathead River. Doug has helped rescue birds of prey, remove baling twin from osprey nests, and given many programs and field trips.

These "MacCarter Twins" have shaped the lives of hundreds of young kids across our country, helped save countless individual wild birds of prey, and undertook turnkey research on the effects of pollution on wild population of osprey around Flathead Lake. Don 's legacy continues through his amazing wildlife photography that will be shared with us at our Sept 9 public meeting. As he has done in the past, Doug continues to help Flathead Audubon in our education and field trip programs, and for that, we are very grateful. *by Gael Bissell*

Coming September 14th at Lone Pine State Park: The Thirteenth Annual Birds of Prey Festival!

Continuing a tradition started by the family of the late Rod Ash in 2006, Flathead Audubon, partnering with Lone Pine State Park, will expand on our big public event of the year with exhibits, booths and programs beginning at 9:00 AM until 1:00 PM. US Forest Service, Glacier NP, MT Fish, Wildlife, and Parks, Flathead Audubon, Hockaday Museum, Flathead Land Trust, and many other organizations will be there with fun activities. Fancy Face Design face painting will be there to turn you and your kids into "raptors" for the day. Montana Coffee Traders will have their delicious bird-friendly coffee and goodies available, and there will be a lunch truck with summertime food.

This year's program lineup promises to be very exciting! Kate Stone, M.S., Avian Scientist with the MPG Ranch Conservation Area in the Bitterroot Valley, has been doing Bald Eagle and Golden Eagle research on migrations and the use of gut-piles from hunting by these birds. She has also focused on the effects of lead bullets on raptor scavengers. Kate graduated from Middlebury College with a B.A. in Environmental Studies and Conservation Biology in 2000. After completing her M.S. in Forestry at the University of Montana on the habitat associations of snowshoe hares, her fieldwork included projects on small mammal response to weed invasions, the response of bird communities to bark beetle outbreaks and targeted surveys for species of concern like the black-backed woodpecker and the Northern goshawk.

Kari Gabriel, The Montana Bird Lady, will be there to do a very educational program with her Prairie Falcon, Rough-legged Hawk and the cutest tiny Sawwhet Owl you will ever encounter.

Derrick Rathe, Park Ranger at Lone Pine, will give us a lesson on basic bird-of-prey identification.

Wild Wings Recovery Center will be outdoors with their large group of volunteers and well over a dozen rehabilitating birds including Ferruginous, Red Tail, Harlan's, Cooper's Hawks, Great Gray and Pygmy Owls, and Peregrine, Merlin and Kestrel Falcons.

Last year we had over 850 people show up and participate! Come early if you are a glutton for knowledge and fun!

Contact Jan Metzmaker (862-7960) or Denny Olson (249-3987) for more information.

2019 OSNA Work Day

The long-awaited 2019 annual workday for the Owen Sowerwine Natural Area is scheduled for Saturday, 28 September. We'll gather at the Montessori School on Willow Glen Drive at 0900 ... doors to open at 0830. We'll carpool to OSNA from Montessori and should be done by noon or so. Many hands make light work, so please come with work gloves and wearing old clothes appropriate for the weather (cloth gloves are not good with hounds tongue!!). Bring water that you can carry with you in a pack or fanny pack. Hand nippers, dandelion diggers and trowels are handy.

There are a few of the usual projects that need to be tackled – some trails cleared and mowed, some old fencing removed, and, of course, as always weeds to be addressed. We will focus some work near the west fence line (to the west of the trails. Some of these areas are a little jumbled and inaccessible, so be prepared to bushwhack some. Others will divide into 4 groups and go in through the four entrances (Montessori, Treasure Lane, Greenridge Drive, and Howard Drive). Note: only one vehicle can go in Treasure Lane due to parking issues.

This should be a fun and quick day as well as sprucing up OSNA. If you have any questions or suggestions or need directions, please contact Bob Lee at 270-0371 or **RML3@centurytel.net**.

Two OSNA Thank You's

Thank you to the **Flathead Conservation District** for providing funding for two herbicide applications at the Owen Sowerwine Natural Area this summer. Flathead Audubon greatly appreciates this financial assistance in support of our OSNA management.

We are grateful also to the **DNRC Kalispell Office** for helping Flathead Audubon pay for herbicides being used at the Owen Sowerwine Natural Area. A special thanks to DNRC's Anne Moran for assisting with arranging this funding.

by Linda Winnie

Audubon Members Support Local Audubon Activities

Fall months always mean campaigns. Nope, not political campaigns, but annual community support campaigns. Some campaigns include nonprofit organizations all around Montana and some include strictly Flathead nonprofits. You look over the list and choose which organizations you want to receive your donation dollars. Flathead Audubon is listed with the Flathead United Way campaign and the Montana State Employees' Charitable Giving Campaign (SECGC). Please direct your donation to Flathead Audubon Society, to help our local birds and nature education programs. It's a good investment!

by Kay Mitchell

To Bee or Not to Bee? Creating Pollinator Habitat in Your Backyard

Come join the Flathead Conservation District for a free workshop and learn about pollinator conservation in your backyard. During this two hour workshop, we'll focus on how you can use native plants to provide forage, nesting, and overwintering habitat for our native pollinators – no matter how big or small your garden is! This workshop will take place at the Flathead Conservation District's newly constructed demonstration garden. For more information, contact Hailey Graf at (406) 752-4220 or hailey@flatheadcd.org.

GET THE PILEATED POST BY EMAIL!

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

* * * *

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☐ Scholarships and Grants
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Late breaking FAS news and announcements
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Newsletter of the Flathead Audubon Society

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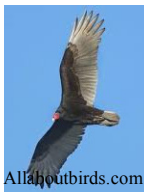
September 2019

Turkey Vulture



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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

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2019-2022	Dave Manuwal	manuwal2@centurylink.net	

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Board Member representing FAS, Bob Lee rml3@centurytel.net 270-0371
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Pays for newsletter and operating costs

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