



the

Pileated Post

Newsletter of the Flathead Audubon Society

October 2019
VOLUME 44, NUMBER 2

Tundra Swan



allaboutbirds.org

Jewel Basin Hawk Watch Underway

Monday September 16th was our 20th survey of the 2019 hawk migration season at the Jewel Basin Hawk Watch northeast of Bigfork, and the second consecutive day with more than 100 birds counted, as the migration is picking up! Daily totals otherwise have been a bit lower than previous years due to foul weather, although our season totals of 740 birds over 20 surveys are both above average numbers for the early part of the season. We have also reached several long-term benchmarks this season. For example, a Sharp-shinned Hawk (naturally) on September 2nd was the 28,000th raptor recorded at the Jewel since our surveys began in 2007! We have also now counted more than 100 Prairie Falcons, 600 Bald Eagles, and 13,000 Sharp-shinned Hawks.

Hopefully by the time you read this article the weather has taken a turn for the better, with sunny skies and strong Southwestern winds. If so, perhaps



Kat Peterson on station

we will get to enjoy Accipiters peaking a 1,000 in just a single week, as observed in previous years!

Here are the totals from the survey days between August 25th and September 16th, with 740 birds of sixteen species recorded (only Rough-legged Hawk and Gyrfalcon have not yet showed up this season. This hawk watch depends heavily on the efforts of volunteers, most of them members of Flathead Audubon, as well as on direct financial support from both Flathead Audubon, Flathead National Forest, and Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks. This year Kat Peterson is working as the technician hired to conduct 30 surveys. Contact **Dan Casey** at 406.270.5941 (danielcasey55@gmail.com) if you would like to participate in any of the surveys this season, which will continue until November 7th, weather allowing.

by Kat Peterson and Dan Casey

Turkey Vulture 3
Osprey 2
Bald Eagle 27
Northern Harrier 6
Sharp-shinned Hawk 322
Cooper's Hawk 168
Northern Goshawk 12

Unknown Accipiter 20
Broad-winged Hawk 6
Swainson's Hawk 1
Red-tailed Hawk 92
Ferruginous Hawk 1
Unknown Buteo 8
Golden Eagle 17

American Kestrel 35
Merlin 3
Peregrine Falcon 2
Prairie Falcon 10
Unknown Falcon 1
Unknown Raptor 2

OSNA WORKDAY is SATURDAY!

This year's OSNA workday is Saturday, September 28. Meet at the Montessori School on Willow Glen Drive at 9:00 AM. Doors open at 830 AM. Bring

drinking water and work gloves, and a hand nipper, dandelion digger, or trowel. For more information, contact Bob Lee at 270-0371 or RML3@centurytel.net.

LAST NEWSLETTER FOR NON-RENEWING MEMBERS

See page 8

OCTOBER FLATHEAD AUDUBON CALENDAR

Monday, October 7, 2019. 6 PM. FAS Board of Directors Meeting, Gateway Community Center, US Hwy 2 West, Kalispell. All welcome.

Monday, October 14, 2019. 7 PM. Flathead Audubon General Meeting, Gateway Community Center, US Hwy 2 West, Kalispell. All welcome. See page 3.

Waterfowl Wednesdays, every Wednesday through October. See page 7.

BIRD OF THE MONTH

YELLOW-HEADED BLACKBIRD

By Ellen Horowitz

Few birds have names descriptive of their appearance, but the Yellow-headed Blackbird is one that wears its name boldly. Acquaintance with yellow-heads, as they are commonly called, provides a visual treat, an audio surprise and an introduction to the world of the marsh.

Yellow-headed Blackbirds breed throughout western North America, from British Columbia to southwest Ontario, the Great Lakes through the Great Plains to the west coast and southwestern states. In winter, these Neotropical migrants travel as far as southern Mexico. Found across Montana from April to November, Yellow-headed Blackbirds are highly visible and vocal during the breeding season in May and June.

The flamboyant male with bright yellow head, neck and chest, jet-black body, and white wing patches makes this robin-size bird unmistakable. The smaller, less conspicuous female has dull yellow face, throat and breast, and brown body. Its scientific name, *Xanthocephalus xanthocephalus*, is Greek for "yellow head, yellow head."

Unlike the melodies of meadowlarks, a member of the Icterid family to which blackbirds belong, the yellow-head's song resembles a metallic buzz or the creaking of rusty gate hinges. This sound adds to an unusual orchestra that may include the rattling, whirring, croaking, booming and gurgling notes and voices of other more secretive avian marsh musicians, such as Soras, Virginia Rails and American Bitterns.

Yellow-headed Blackbirds, larger than their red-winged cousins, dominate in areas where both are present. Redwing Blackbirds appear early in spring and exploit all areas of a marsh until the yellow-heads arrive. Territorial interactions between the two are an easily observed bird behavior that is part of the spring-time ritual at a marsh. Yellow-headed Blackbirds take over the prime real estate, often located near the center of large wetlands, and oust the redwings to shallower water near the edges.

Nesting colonies of Yellow-headed Blackbirds are found where

dense cattails and bulrushes grow in two to four feet of water and where insect life is rich. Some colonies contain as many as 25 to 30 nests within a 15 square foot area. Each adult male stakes his claim within the larger framework of the colony. A polygynous breeder, he mates with several females who nest within his defended territory.

The female weaves long strands of wet vegetation around cattails or other tall aquatic plants to form her nest. As the basket-like structure dries, it pulls the supports taught. The location of a nest ranges from 10 to 30 inches above the water. Deep water protects the nest and its occupants from prowling predators -- skunks, raccoons and foxes. Tall, thick vegetation hides them from northern harriers and other birds of prey.

During the breeding season, the diet of yellow-headed blackbirds consists primarily of insects and spiders. The birds glean them from the ground, plants, or hawk them from the air. Seeds, including grain, form a major portion of their diet during the rest of the year. Like all Icterids, the yellow-head has a strong,

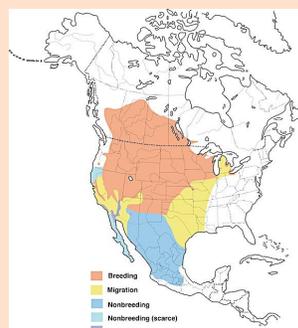
straight, pointed bill and powerful muscles that control its opening and closing. After inserting its bill into the ground or matted vegetation, the yellow-head spreads its bill, which presses against the surrounding substrate to form a cavity. The behavior, known as "gaping," allows access to hidden food sources.

Yellow-headed blackbirds feed in freshly plowed lands, cultivated fields and pastures during migration. Although they cause some damage to agricultural crops by pulling up seedlings and eating grain, the insects and weed seeds they consume prove more beneficial than harmful.

During autumn migration, male yellow-heads form separate flocks from females and young. Within portions of their range, they are frequently part of enormous winter flocks that include Red-winged Blackbirds, grackles and cowbirds. Although they aren't commonly seen during Christmas Bird Counts in Montana, Yellow-headed Blackbirds have, on rare occasions, been found around Bigfork and Ninepipes National Wildlife Refuge, among a few other places in the state.



THE BIRDS OF NORTH AMERICA



October Program

Restoring Montana's Rivers

presented by Ryan Richardson

Ryan Richardson, a Fluvial Geomorphologist with River Design Group will be the guest speaker at the Flathead Audubon Monday, October 14 meeting. Montana is known for its amazing clean clear rivers, especially here in the Flathead. But what can be done for rivers impacted by human activities? River Design Group, a small local business, has been tackling this question across the state for the past 16 years. Ryan's program will show how a team of engineers and scientists can help restore habitat for the amazing wildlife that makes this the last best



place. This talk will cover how and why rivers are restored. Example projects will include the Milltown Dam Removal in Missoula, O'Dell Spring Creek near Ennis, and McGregor Meadows Wildlife Management Area only 45 minutes from Kalispell. Join us to learn more about the efforts to keep Montana's river clean, cold and free for future generations. The meeting begins at 7 PM at the Gateway Community Room in Kalispell and is free and open to the public. For more information, go to www.flatheadaudubon.org.

Thank You Flathead Audubon!

Both Jane and I are honored and grateful to receive the Conservation Achievement Recognition from the Flathead Chapter of the Audubon Society. I only wish my twin brother, Don, was standing next to me at the award presentation.

Don's wife Jane and I would like to acknowledge Dr. James Koplín and Dr. John Craighead for their guidance and support. Dr. Koplín was our major professor from Humboldt State in northern California. He was instrumental in providing grants for the osprey project. Dr. Craighead headed the Montana Co-Op Wildlife Unit at the University of Montana. He made major contributions in the form of equipment for the osprey project.

In addition, we would like to thank Dr. Richard Solberg and Dr. Eric Greene. Dr. Solberg was the Dean of Arts and Sciences as well as the director of the Biological Station at Flathead Lake. He provided lab space, equipment, and housing at the Yellow Bay

Biological Station. Dr. Greene, a current U of M Wildlife Professor, made it possible for us to resurvey the osprey population on Flathead Lake after a 40 plus year hiatus.

It is interesting to note that the Osprey fledging productivity does not appear to have changed that significantly between the original study (1966-1976) and recent years. The 10-year average of annual productivity in the original study was 1.07 fledglings per nest. Over the last 3 years, Dr. Rick Mace and I found that the average fledgling productivity in both Flathead Lake and Flathead River is 1.15. Our studies indicate that the average reproductive performance of Ospreys is sufficient to maintain a stable population over time.

To the Board and the members, on behalf of my late brother Don, both Jane and I say thank you!

Doug MacCarter and Jane MacCarter

CHIRPS & SQUAWKS

Highlights from the September 3 2019 Board meeting

- ◆ We had a chance to meet Kat Petersen, who will be serving as a primary observer for Hawk Watch for 30 days this fall. Welcome Kat.
- ◆ President Gael Bissell would be interested in partnering with an FAS member who could assist her in writing acknowledgement and thank you cards. If interested, see Gael.
- ◆ Kay Mitchell and Rod Walette are working on a Conservation District grant application to fund a more comprehensive effort at controlling invasive plants in OSNA.
- ◆ We are reviewing better ways to publicize field trips next year to improve attendance.
- ◆ The Board approved the expenditure for preparing the membership cards, member stickers, and pileated woodpecker stickers. They will be available soon.
- ◆ Mike Fanning reminded everyone that it's time to renew your annual membership.



Conservation Educator's Niche

By Denny Olson

We are social animals, and our 'kind' – the pack (or village) animals (wolves, chimpanzees, gorillas, orcas, etc.) -- are almost desperate to know where they fit in their social environment. Of course, social animals receive conformity messages from the pack or herd or club. But in most cases, there is still a specific (and appreciated) niche that individuals fill. The balance between conformity to social rules and creative contribution to the welfare of the group changes with climate, food availability, or political leadership – depending on which species we are. In our species, our schools express the wishes of our culture, and therefore the location of that critical fulcrum between creativity and conformity. To some, schools function largely for compliance and thought control. To others, they appear as “failing” to prepare future workers for their necessary “productivity” (read: becoming good consumers).

The real problem with schools could be the definition of “school”. In our culture, school is thought of as a confined *location*, usually indoors, with strict rules of status, a rigid “subject area” schedule which promotes disjointed thinking, a sense of “community” based largely on competitive sports accomplishments, a place of preparation for life in an environment which has far too little in common with life outside of the building, and a place where many busy parents can abdicate responsibilities for child-rearing while they work. After school, television, smart phones, and video games sometimes allow the same work-exhausted parents to continue their abdication at home.

Many politicians think of school as preparation for a generic job market through obedience training. Yet it is also convenient for them to promote the perception that *schools* (not voters, not media, not parents) should have the responsibility when a kid “goes wrong”.

In reality, schools mirror the expectations of the culture at large. Politicians *follow* (often lagging back a considerable distance) those cultural expectations – and they often protect their jobs by resisting change. Leadership has always been about anticipation of change and courage to promote the changes, even if a constituency resists hearing about the work and adjustments involved. This quality flies in the face of winning popularity contests (elections). Re-thinking and restructuring schools is a *grass-roots* job for educators, parents, mentors, spiritual leaders and the

larger community of concerned people (including Flathead Audubon!). It is too important to leave in the hands of those who spend much more time on personal image management and campaigning, than on vision and leading.

Using my own childhood as my closest-to-home example, school is not a confined location, with narrow opportunities for status based on Darwinian principles of inherited talent and behavioral conformity. School is a process. “Schooling” is about finding a place to *belong* in an arena of ever-broadening opportunities. “School” in its present form (an indoor location, almost totally isolated from the real communities of nature and our society) will never be able to reduce the culture shock that graduates feel, because actual participation in the larger society, and in the spaceship in which we travel called “Earth”, is discouraged by the very structure of school. How much do our graduates personally and directly know and feel about the local, natural world that sustains them – that *allows them to live in the world?*

“As you go out into the world...” – the common phrase of commencement addresses – speaks volumes about the disengagement of “schools” and therefore children, from nature and the rest of society. After the adrenaline rush of the ceremony, that deer-in-the-headlights, “Now what?” look is all too common among graduates. Flathead Audubon and like-minded organizations are about re-integrating schooling with the real world, and vice versa – from infancy to adulthood. We are about “As you *continue* your involvement and participation in the world...” as a logical, desirable, and necessary alternative catch-phrase. Graduation from school should be no big deal. It should be just another milestone in the life-long process of schooling, a landmark that reinforces children’s already strong sense of place in the world.

The safety net for disempowered dropouts, for the embarrassing relationships between poverty and achievement in a superpower nation, is *all* of us – as constant teachers and constant students – taking personal responsibility for the condition of our world. To sustain our species, to sustain the viability of our natural, economic, political, spiritual and common world, demands both the courage to re-think how our children develop, and our active participation in that process. To leave “field trips” out of that equation is educational negligence. Nothing less.

Not that I have an opinion about that ...



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Birds of Prey Festival Report

On September 14th, our crew did it again! The weather was great, as always, Lone Pine staff had the venue set, and from the time I led 12 rookie birders on a how-to-use-binoculars-and-spot-birds-field trip at 7:30 AM until our 1 PM closing, another 800 citizens had walked into our venue and learned, learned, learned!

Special thanks go out to our presenters – Park Ranger Derrick, Montana Bird Lady Kari Gabriel and Avian Scientist Kate

Stone – for sharing a wealth of raptor knowledge. As is usually the case, the biggest visual attraction outdoors was Beth Watne, Wild Wings Recovery Center Director, bringing many of her non-releasable birds and volunteer handlers. Most of the Flathead Audubon Board were there as volunteers, as usual, with some others who were not board members. The exhibits were informative, the shuttle system to alleviate parking room at Lone Pine went off without a hitch, and the food supplied



June Ash and Tink the Saw-whet Owl

by Lil Red Caboose was delicious! Kathleen Francis from Fancy Face Design had cute little hawk and owl faces running all over the place.

I had an inkling of how it would go that day around 8 AM. Our dozen new birders had seen nothing but red squirrels on the trail, when I explained that sometimes, this time of the year, birds don't wake up until a little later in the day. Almost immediately, a flicker started yelling above us, a Pileated

woodpecker flew just over our heads and landed, yelling as well. A mixed flock of two species each of chickadees and nuthatches flew into the tree in front of us, singing their different songs, and a Downy and Hairy woodpecker both sat next to each other on the same trunk for a perfect lesson on how to ID each. More than one new birder turned and said to me, "I had no idea all this was out here!" New birders, new FAS members, the world shifting on its axis -- just a tiny bit. It's what we do.

by Denny Olson



Kathy Ross and young bird lover at the Flathead Audubon festival booth



Kathleen the face painter and owl-faced boy

Natural Events To See This Month:

Golden Eagle migration is peaking in Glacier National Park and Jewel Basin.

Glacier National Park Fall Raptor Migration Study

Public invited to participate in Hawk Watch raptor migration count during September and October

Each year Golden Eagles and other raptors migrate from northern breeding grounds to warmer climates. One of the most important North American Golden Eagle migration routes passes directly through Glacier National Park along the Continental Divide. Volunteers can choose specific dates in September and October to hike approximately 4.5 miles up the Mount Brown trail (roughly 4,000 feet in elevation gain) to collect data from 10 AM to 4 PM. The second site near Lake McDonald Lodge is accessible by road and will focus on counts of migrating Golden Eagles starting September 23 from 12 to 4 PM daily.

In the mid-1990's biologists documented nearly 2,000 Golden Eagles migrating past Mount Brown annually. Recent data from outside Glacier National Park indicate significant declines in Golden Eagle

numbers. Due to this concern, the park initiated a Citizen Science Raptor Migration Project in 2011 to investigate possible locations for a Hawk Watch site. Hawk Watch sites are part of an international effort to track long-term raptor population trends using systematic counts of migrating raptors. Observers also record data on sex, age, color morph and behavior of raptors, as well as weather and environmental conditions. To see a map of Hawk Watch sites around the world go to <https://www.hawkcount.org/sitesel.php>

Glacier National Park Volunteer Associates, the Glacier National Park Conservancy and their donors provide support for this program. Contact GLAC_citizen_science@nps.gov or call (406) 888-7986 for more information or to sign up for a survey.

Lead Bullets and Wildlife

By Lewis Young and Kate Stone

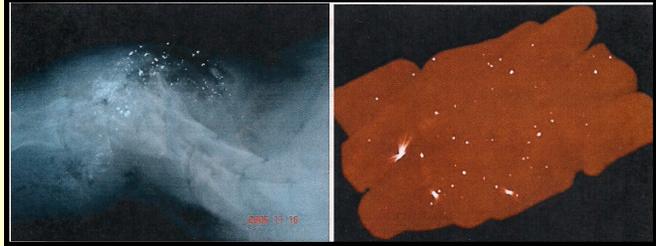


Found near Hamilton MT, 2014, this Bald Eagle died from lead poisoning. It exhibited clinical signs of lead poisoning such as head and wing droop, muscle tremors, and anorexia. Photo courtesy Brooke Tanner, Wild Skies Raptor Center.

Big game hunting season is approaching. If you are hunter using lead bullets you can help wildlife by switching to non-lead bullets. Lead bullets, even copper jacketed lead bullets, fired from high velocity guns fragment on impact losing 20-40% of their mass when they hit an object. As many as 200 fragments disperse throughout the carcass and are often too small to see. The fragments may permeate the meat you bring home and often riddle the gut piles and carcasses left in the field.

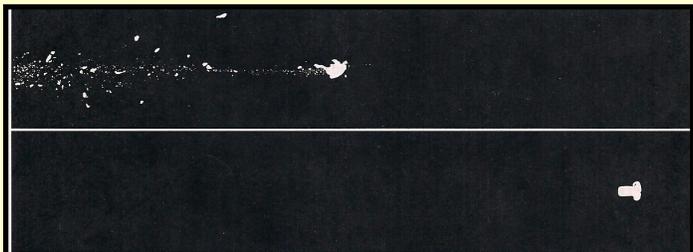
Why are lead fragments a problem? Avian and mammalian scavengers feed on the gut piles and carcasses and ingest the lead fragments. Overwintering eagles in many parts of Montana test positive for elevated lead levels and several die each year from acute lead poisoning. Raptor View Research Institute tested 32 Golden Eagles and 11 Bald Eagles from the Bitterroot Valley from 2011-2014 and found that 86% had elevated blood lead concentrations. Evidence from multiple studies points to lead fragments as the culprit behind elevated lead levels in eagles and other scavengers.

What can be done? It's fairly simple. Switch to a non-lead bullet. Over the last several years they have become available in factory loaded ammunition and multiple choices are available to those who hand-load their own ammunition. Non-lead bullets are nor-



Left, deer neck shot with lead bullet. Right, MRI of random packaged venison with lead fragments. Photos courtesy of Craighead Beringia South.

mally all copper or copper alloys and retain virtually 100% of their weight upon impact. Non-lead ammunition costs more than many traditional jacketed-lead bullets but the cost of ammunition is typically a very



X-ray images of lead (top) and non-lead (bottom) bullets shot into a ballistics gel. Photo courtesy Jeremy Roberts/Conservation Media.

small portion of the total spent on the entire hunting experience. I personally switched to non-lead bullets several years ago and have been entirely happy with their performance in every way.

Does switching to non-lead bullets make a difference? A voluntary program in the Jackson Hole area of Wyoming in 2009-2010 to get hunters to switch to non-lead bullets resulted in a corresponding decrease in the blood-lead levels of eagles using the area so it can make a difference,

Give our eagles and other wildlife a break and consider switching to non-lead bullets.



FLATHEAD AUDUBON MISSION STATEMENT

THE FLATHEAD AUDUBON SOCIETY IS A LOCAL CHAPTER OF THE NATIONAL AUDUBON SOCIETY.



- ⇒ OUR MISSION IS TO CONSERVE BIRDS, WILDLIFE HABITAT, AND ECOSYSTEM DIVERSITY.
- ⇒ WE PROMOTE AWARENESS AND APPRECIATION OF THE NATURAL WORLD THROUGH EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITIES AND ADVOCACY PROGRAMS.
- ⇒ WE WORK WITH DIVERSE GROUPS AND AGENCIES TO ACHIEVE SOUND DECISIONS ON NATURAL RESOURCE ISSUES.
- ⇒ WHILE FOCUSING OUR EFFORTS IN NORTHWEST MONTANA, WE BELIEVE IN THE PROTECTION OF THE EARTH AND ALL OF ITS INHABITANTS.

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.



WATERFOWL WEDNESDAYS WITH JAKE BRAMANTE, every Wednesday through October, 4-5:30 PM.

Ever wonder what that duck is floating out in a pond? Join Jake Bramante for Waterfowl Wednesdays through the month of October. We'll be meeting at the Park and Ride at the corner of Hwy 93 and Hwy 82 (near the old White Oak) every Wednesday from 4-5:30 pm through the month of October (weather permitting). Come and learn how to tell the differences between common waterfowl that migrate through the Flathead Valley. The Park and Ride is located right next to the split pond near Somers and allows for easy watching of waterfowl from the parking lot and along the Sonny Boone Memorial Trail that heads south into Somers. Bring your binoculars and a spotting scope if you have one or both. For more questions, email Jake at jake@hike734.com.

Tune into our FAS Website for possible Fall Field trip info. If weather permits, we may have a trip in mid-October to Golden Eagle migration viewing at Lake Mac Donald Lodge and possibly other spontaneous trips that might develop.

A huge THANK YOU to our incredible and knowledgeable field trip leaders this past season for sharing their valuable time and expertise. Nine participants even braved the big storm in mid-August to attend 'Going Batty'.

Our great Field Trip leaders

Diane Boyd	Chris Hammond	Beverly Skinner	Gail Cleveland	Cory Davis
Laura Katzman	Steve Gniadek	Paul Rossi	Jeanette Oliver	Kathy Ross
Lisa Bate	Lewis Young	Bruce Tannehill	Denny Olson	

When It's Okay (or Not) to Feed Birds

Whether we identify as birders or photographers or both, we are always looking for ways to get closer to birds, or to bring them closer to us. Offering food is an easy way to do that. But knowing what kind of food is okay to supply, and when, and where, can be confusing.

So how do we make sense of it all? For guidance, ask yourself these three questions.

1. Is this species at risk? If a bird is classified as "threatened," "endangered," or "of special concern," that means it is struggling to survive. We must exercise extreme caution when making decisions that might affect that bird. Even if we have the best intentions, what we think might benefit a bird might actually cause unintended negative consequences.

2. Is the food appropriate and safely provided? The most common place we offer food to birds is, of course, in our own backyards. Fortunately, there is a wealth of information on how to safely set up and maintain bird feeders. Providing feeders means taking on a responsibility, as in addition to food they can present a whole host of risks, including the spread of viruses and parasites, a greater chance of window

strikes, and increased vulnerability to cats and raptors.

Of course, the healthiest, most natural food you can offer to attract birds to your yard are native trees and shrubs.

3) Is feeding this bird likely to change its behavior in harmful ways? Might feeding this bird cause it to associate food with a particular place? Does it draw the bird closer to roads, for example, where it could be struck by a car? Feeding a bird might also lead it to trust people. Could that habituation eventually put it in danger? Does the bird migrate to a region where it's not well understood, or where it's hunted? The answer will be different for a bird of prey (possibly yes) than for a songbird at a feeder or for a chickadee hand-fed sunflower seeds in a preserve (probably no).

You don't have to be a bird expert or conservationist to realize that birds today face a multitude of challenges. When thinking of offering food to birds, as nature photographers, birders, or nature lovers, each one of us can take a little time to do some research and to sensibly weigh the pros and cons of our choices. *adapted from National Audubon*

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 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 organi-

zation in the Flathead Valley which offers free environmental education.

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*

Amazon Smile

If you are shopping online at Amazon don't forget to support Flathead Audubon Society by using "Amazon Smile" at smile.amazon.com and select FAS as the organization to support. Then Amazon donates to Flathead Audubon Society.

To see the impact of your shopping, visit the AmazonSmile Metrics Dashboard for Flathead Audubon Society. Simply log in at org.amazon.com and click the "View metrics" button.

The Effects of Management Practices on Grassland Birds

Seven updated and expanded species accounts (Mountain Plover, Upland Sandpiper, Long-billed Curlew, Marbled Godwit, Willet, Wilson's Phalarope, and American Bittern) were recently published by the U.S. Geological Survey, Northern Prairie Wildlife Research Center. The accounts provide land managers with a summary of information on the effects of specific management practices on grassland birds and help to identify the most critical research gaps in the understanding of grassland bird ecology, habitat

needs, and responses to management practices.

The published accounts are linked on the following parent page: <https://pubs.er.usgs.gov/publication/pp1842>. An additional 33 species accounts are making their way through the publication process and are expected to be published within the coming year. The Greater Sage-Grouse account and several grassland raptor accounts will be published and uploaded soon.

Natural Events To See This Month:

Grizzly bears raid squirrel middens for whitebark pine seeds.

The Montana Native Plant Society- Flathead Chapter and the Northwest Montana History Museum

invite the public to:

Making Their Mark: John and Carrie Leiberg in the Salish Country 1884-1907. Friday, October 18, 7:00 PM. The Northwest Montana History Museum, 124 Second Avenue East, Kalispell (formerly Museum at Central School)

Jack Nisbet's latest book, *The Dreamer and the Doctor*, unveils the remarkable adventures of John and Carrie Leiberg. John was a Swedish immigrant who carried out landmark forest reserve surveys across northern Idaho and western Montana in the 1890s and loved plants. His wife Carrie, a practicing physician, carved out her own role with the Northern Pacific as "the only female railroad surgeon in the known world." Join author Jack Nisbet for a slide presentation that explores how the Leibergs fit into the western Montana and Idaho frontiers, and how their adventures resonate with issues that still confound us today. Doors will open at 6:15 at The Northwest Mon-

tana History Museum, 124 Second Avenue East, Kalispell (formerly Museum at Central School). Beer and wine will be for sale before the program, and Jack will be selling copies of his book *The Dreamer and the Doctor*, after.

Jack Nisbet's influential books *Sources of the River* and *The Mapmaker's Eye* tracked fur trader and cartographer David Thompson across the Intermountain West. Nisbet is also the author of an award-winning biography of naturalist David Douglas and several collections of essays that explore the human and natural history of our region.



Thank You!

...to those below who have made donations to Flathead Audubon

Eagle

Mr. Franklin E. Schroeter



Kestrel

Frank & Linda de Kort
in memory of Lois Drobish



Supporting Member + Donation

Barbara Boorman in memory of Richard Kuhl
Kathleen Sheehan Dugan
Caryn Gronvold
Max & Nila Lauder
Karen Nichols in memory of Lois Drobish
Karina Ott
Darcy Thomas



My Own Vision

Idell Weydemeyer



Here's How to Save on Your Taxes for This Year

If you have an IRA and are "of an age" that you must take a Required Minimum Distribution each year, you have probably griped about having to include that RMD amount in your income when you do your taxes. A good way to avoid having to pay tax on those dollars is to have your institution (bank, credit union, investment company, etc.) that holds your IRA transfer that amount directly to a qualifying nonprofit organization before the end of the year. Flathead Audubon Society is such a "qualifying nonprofit organization." The rules are pretty strict for this, so you need to talk to your institution ahead of time to get everything set up correctly. We welcome your transfer and will provide you with a receipt for your donation, as well as many bird songs and programs for your generosity!

by Kay Mitchell

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

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



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4519118 www.flathead.com

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



Clipartfest.com



Newsletter of the Flathead Audubon Society

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

October 2019

Mountain Chickadee



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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 listing officers: President (Gael Bissell), Vice-President (Cory Davis), Past President (Kay Mitchell), Secretary (Pam Willison), Treasurer (Joe Batts) with contact info.

COMMITTEE CHAIRS

Table listing committee chairs for Conservation, Education, Field Trips, Finance, Hospitality, Membership, and Nominations.

DIRECTORS

Table listing directors from 2017-2020 to 2019-2020 with names and contact info.

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.

Name
Address
City
State Zip Code
Phone
Email

Your email address is safe with us.

Mail this form with your check to:

Flathead Audubon Society Membership
P.O. Box 9173
Kalispell, MT 59904