



the Silent Post

Newsletter of the Flathead Audubon Society

VOLUME 26

NUMBER 6

FEBRUARY, 2002

YOUR HELP IS NEEDED FOR THE 5th ANNUAL GREAT BACKYARD BIRD COUNT FEBRUARY 15-18, 2002

Harry Potter fans and bird enthusiasts from all walks of life are invited to help track "Harry Potter's owl" and other birds February 15 through 18, 2002, as part of the fifth annual Great Backyard Bird Count (GBBC).

A project of Audubon and the Cornell Lab of Ornithology with sponsorship from Wild Birds Unlimited, the GBBC asks everyone with an interest in birds--families, individuals, classrooms, community groups--to count the numbers and kinds of birds they see during any or all of the four count days. They can count in their backyards, schoolyards, local parks, nature centers, even at the office. Reports are made over the Internet at BirdSource, a state-of-the-art web site developed by the Cornell Lab of Ornithology and Audubon. "This is the fifth year of the Great Backyard Bird Count, and we couldn't be more excited," says Frank Gill, Audubon's Senior Vice President for Science. "We're in the midst of a major invasion of sorts--many bird species that typically spend the year in Canada and the extreme northern U.S. are moving into regions farther south. With help from bird lovers everywhere, we'll be able to see which species are where during the Great Backyard Bird Count."

One of the species making rare appearances is the Snowy Owl, a species that has become widely recognized recently as a result of the immense popularity of the Harry Potter books and recent movie, *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone*. In the series, Harry's pet is a Snowy Owl named Hedwig.

Now, people will be able to contribute data and learn about the Snowy Owl for real, during the Great Backyard Bird Count. Snowy Owls typically spend the year in the far north, feeding on lemmings in the arctic tundra. Some

winters, this food source reaches an extreme low, forcing many of the owls into areas farther south. This winter, Snowy Owls have already made appearances in southern Maine, New Hampshire, upstate New York, North and South Dakota, Iowa, Minnesota, Idaho, Kansas, Missouri, Oklahoma, and elsewhere. With help from GBBC participants, the whereabouts of Snowy Owls will be plotted on maps at the web site almost as soon as reports are made throughout the four count days.

Special GBBC web pages will feature Snowy Owls and nine other North American owl species as well, representing a range of habitats and geographic locales. Species summaries, images, calls, and conservation status will be available at the web site as well. Two of the featured owls--Short-eared Owl and Elf Owl--are on Audubon's "WatchList" because they are showing population declines. Another species, the Burrowing Owl, is also declining in parts of its range.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 5

FAS CALENDAR OF EVENTS FOR FEBRUARY 2002

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 11 The Flathead Audubon Society General Meeting will feature a slide program illustrating why woodpeckers and other wildlife species need snags, logs and old trees by wildlife biologist Lisa Bate. Please join us for a what will be a very interesting program. The meeting begins at 7:30PM at the Fish, Wildlife & Parks Building at 490 Meridian Rd. in Kalispell. A Board of Directors meeting will take place at 5:30PM just prior to the general meeting. Everyone is welcome to attend.

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 17 Join FAS for a field trip to the Mission Valley in search of raptors and other winter visitors. We will spend most of the day birdwatching. Please call Leslie Kehoe for more information or if you would like to sign up for the field trip at 837-4467.



CHICKADEE CHATTER

Part two of tales from New Zealand is about an adventure. Now I must tell you that adventure is not hard to come by in the wild country of the South Island of NZ. One only needs to drive a short distance from Christchurch and you will find yourself on a splendid road in the midst of a rugged mountain valley. I spent several days in a beautiful town in the Southern Lakes region called Wanaka on the shores of an immense glacial lake of the same name. The town is near Mount Aspiring National Park, which is known for its rugged mountains, a mountain climbers paradise.

I set out one morning for a long hike into the mountains. The sky was cloudy and most of the mountains were obscured, rain was in the forecast but when you are in New Zealand in the late spring, rain will not stop you. It was a two hour drive on a narrow gravel road up the Matukituki Valley to the trailhead at Raspberry Flat. The Matukituki is a wide glacial U-shaped valley with a meandering braided river flowing through it and green pasture land full of sheep and cows and red deer and birds. The walls of the valley sweep up steeply and on that day disappeared into the clouds and mist.

I drove along the road with the windows of the car open listening to the calls of the birds of springtime in the southern hemisphere. The Skylark was one of my favorites, this sparrow-like bird originates in Europe and was introduced to NZ and is now very common in open meadows. It sings a truly beautiful song from on high and hovers in mid-air proclaiming its territory. It is very aptly named and I spent many minutes listening to its beautiful song. There are other European introductions that have found niches in NZ as well the Chaffinch, the Yellowhammer, and the Green finch are some of the most common. Some have adapted to more than one habitat, the Chaffinch for example is found in the open meadow country but I also found them deep in the rainforest and high in the mountains. They are a very attractive rosy colored bird with white wing bars and a lovely song. Many of these introductions have found empty niches to live in and they seem to co-exist well with the native birds. Unfortunately, NZ has the same problem that we do here in the USA, the native bird populations are declining. Mostly due to habitat loss.

There were other sounds as well, the only familiar sound was the cry of gulls. Gulls sound the same the world over it seems even if they don't look quite the same. Only three species of gulls are found in NZ. It makes life much simpler at least where gull identification is concerned. The Black-backed Gull, a very large strikingly patterned gull and the Black-billed Gull are the two that will be found inland and there were hundreds of them in the green fields alongside the road or flying overhead. Spur-Winged Plovers and Pied Oystercatchers could be seen in the fields with the gulls. And overhead and on the occasional fence post the Australasian Harrier. There are only two raptors present in NZ today, the harrier and the NZ Falcon. The harriers are the more common of the two and as hard as I looked I never did see a falcon. The harriers look somewhat

different than our familiar Northern Harriers but they do have the white tell tale patch of feathers in the uppertail. They soar and circle like all raptors and I never grew tired of seeing them as I traveled. Other raptors existed but are now extinct, a large sea eagle and another very large harrier were hunted for food and feathers by the Maori.

The forecast of rain became a reality as I got closer to the mountains. It rained every day I was in NZ except the last but that is part of spring here. It is even more difficult to predict the weather there than it is here, a long range forecast consists of the weather for the next 24 to 36 hours never more. You will be happy to know that the weather forecasters NZ are just as good at their profession as they are here!

The rain came down in torrents and moments later a patch of blue sky would peek out of the clouds and rays of golden sunshine would illuminate the mountainsides. There were waterfalls everywhere, the water looked like it was falling from heaven itself as the upper slopes of the mountains were hidden in the mists.

After fording many small streams and a harrowing drive on a very narrow road beside the river the West Matukituki Valley broadens a bit and there is the trailhead. I set out on my walk in a steady drizzle but I was prepared or so I thought. The track to the Rob Roy Glacier starts out on the valley floor and crosses a half-mile or so of verdant pastureland. I had several hundred sheep and a grumpy cow for company on the way to a swingbridge that crosses the West Matukituki River. Once across the bridge the track goes **up, up** into the mountains and into a luxuriant Silver and Red Beech rainforest. The walk into the rainforest is nothing more than remarkable, astonishing, amazing, marvelous, wonderful....words alone cannot describe this place. It is simply alive, every patch of ground is covered with something alive and growing. There are hundreds of species of ferns and liverworts and mosses and lichens, most of which I have never beheld. Each little frond and leaf and spike had shiny little droplets of water on it. Walking in a forest such as this was like stepping back into a land that time has forgotten. The world we have made for ourselves is very far away and there were no sounds and very little sign of humans.



There is very little bird song but the sound of water falling was everywhere and it was most wonderful. Rob Roy stream rushes down by the track for much of the way, the water in the stream is deadly cold and milky with glacial silt as it flows directly from the glacier. Deep pools here and there were a beautiful turquoise blue. Beautiful ethereal waterfalls fell from on high just on the other side of the trail which was littered with tiny beech leaves (about the size of a dime) and they gave off that very distinctive smell of tanin but with hints of other exotic smells so that it was not quite familiar. When one walks in such a place every sense is used. It is a most remarkable experience.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 3



FEBRUARY PROGRAM

WHY WILDLIFE NEEDS SNAG, LARGE TREES AND LOGS

Wildlife biologist Lisa Bate will present a slide program illustrating why woodpeckers and other wildlife species need snags, logs and old trees. Bate, who does contract work for the U.S. Forest Service, will share how decaying trees provide crucial habitat for cavity nesting birds such as woodpeckers and other wildlife species.

Woodpeckers and other animals, in turn, provide a 'built-in immune system' for the forest by keeping insect numbers in check. Bates stresses the importance of providing habitat for woodpeckers in order to maintain overall forest health.

Carpenter ants that occupy decaying trees provide the primary food for pileated woodpeckers. The carpenter ants are also one of the primary predators on spruce bud worm, an insect that can damage spruce trees.

As an outgrowth of her Master's degree work at the University of Idaho, Bate developed sampling methods for surveying snags, large trees and logs. She now works with the Forest Service to determine the relationship between roads and the densities of large trees, snags and logs.

As an added bonus, Bate will also discuss how to prevent woodpecker damage to homes and buildings.

Also, at the Flathead Audubon meeting, Gael Bissell and Alan Wood of the Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks will be presented an award for their outstanding conservation achievement in securing a 141,000-acre conservation easement on Plum Creek land in the Thompson and Fisher River drainages. It is the largest easement of its kind in Montana conservation history.



only recently relinquished and evidence of their passing is everywhere. Somewhere in the mist above me was the mountain and the glacier. I could hear ice cracking and falling and suddenly the mists lifted enough and there above me and across the vale was the Rob Roy glacier. An immense field of deep blue ice and crevasses and rock hanging in a glacial cirque; very beautiful and imposing at the same time. Just to the left of the glacier a lovely waterfall fell hundreds of feet to the valley floor.

I stood there in the pouring rain, soaking wet, (even Gore-tex has its limits) in awe, just living in the moment as they say because there was nothing else I could do. My reverie was broken by the arrival of a bird, a parrot of all things here in the mountains. This was my second encounter with the Kea, the mountain parrots of NZ. The Kea is found only in NZ, generally in the alpine regions at the tree line, it is one of the world's rare alpine parrots. The Kea is a very large (about the size of a Red-tailed Hawk) olive green bird with scarlet underwings and rump. Very striking.

It was a surprise to find this very large bird with a very sharp beak suddenly standing five feet in front of me. For one so large it flew nearly silently. They are quite intelligent and marvelously curious creatures. We have 'do not feed the bears' signs in our parks and NZ has 'do not feed the Kea' signs. This one followed me back down the trail for some distance and finally flew off into the trees. It was an encounter I am not soon to forget.

The walk back to the car was wet, very wet. There was water everywhere, in puddles on the trail, dripping off of every bough and frond and rock and the end of my nose. The very air was laden with moisture. It was 6PM by the time I returned to the car, soaking wet, battered and bruised and feeling very alive. There was still another three hours of daylight left and I got in the car and went off in search of another adventure. Mt. Aspiring National Park is a place of great inspiration, a place that is good for the heart and the soul, a place where dreams come true.

Leslie Kehoe



CHICKADEE CHATTER

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2

Here in the deep forest are the lovely little Chaffinch and a native bird called a Silvereye which is well named as is a bright olive green above with a pink belly and a very white ring around the eye. The Gray Warbler lives here too, it is a small (about the size of a Pygmy Nuthatch) gray bird that is only found in NZ. It was pleasant to watch these tiny little birds flitting about in the trees in search of insects, always in motion.

After walking for several hours in this ancient land you will walk out of the forest and into a subalpine area full of fascinating native tussock grasses and wildflowers. This is a rough land that the glaciers have

THANK YOU! THANK YOU!

The board of directors of the Flathead Audubon Society would like to thank the people that participated in our December fund raising. We had \$225 in donations, which with the matching \$200 brought the total to \$425. Both Owen Sowerwine and our new education program have expanded our funding needs, so the money will be well spent.



FROM THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS: LEO KEANE

THE OTHER FOOT



Here we go again. I see by this morning's opinion page my colleagues in the conservation community and I are being mightily disparaged. What bothers me most is that I once thrived on the tremendous level of interest generated by natural resource issues out here in the West.

Where I come from, back in the Midwest, apathy reigns. Trees fall, bulldozers doze and asphalt flows while nobody blinks an eye. It's taken for granted that when it comes to the countryside "now you see it, now you don't." Today's vibrant wetland is tomorrow's drainage ditch and cornfield. In a twinkling, the woods of oak and maple and wild birds are transformed into shopping malls and miles of parking. New highways gut the most beautiful of valleys. Nobody mentions it, not a peep. That's progress. I've always called it complacency, and it drove me right out of there.

How refreshing it was some 30 years ago to find these mountains where people care enough to argue about things. This, I thought, is where I belong. Speaking up with my friends and neighbors to keep a river flowing free; alongside my fellow citizen, fellow advocate for wild places and wildlife. Out here with people like you it felt so good not to be the Lone Ranger, the odd duck of a nature boy, a voice crying in the wilderness. Or lack thereof. We had, it seemed, found ourselves in a community of like-minded people and that created a tangible energy. We were a force for conservation and we changed the way things got done. Proudly too.

The shoe is on the other foot now. If the opinion page of our daily newspaper is any barometer, you are reviled. You think a grizzly bear or a blue-gray gnatcatcher has as much right to her home on this earth as any person? That's un-American. Can't comprehend our world class valley steamrolled by sprawl? Obstructionist. Or are you one of those types who cheerfully step out of your pick-up at the gate in the road and walk! (you stupid fool) into that quiet, mountain forest in search of the illusive hermit thrush, or six point bull, or pail full of huckleberries? Now we're talking environmental extremist. Furthermore, if you believe forest fires are caused by dry weather, by 75 years of not letting them burn, and that pouring millions of dollars on them usually doesn't put the big ones out anyway, then you've gone off the deep end my friend. You are a wacko, nature faker and out of your mind. It gets worse. Subscribe to all of the above AND the Clean Water Act, The Endangered Species Act, the Montana Environmental Policy Act plus support comprehensive land use planning while belonging to any radical, left wing conservation organization like The Nature Conservancy, National Audubon Society, World Wildlife Fund, Ducks Unlimited—well, then they've reserved the "N" word for you.

Kind of takes the joy out of being an environmentalist doesn't it. Kind of takes the joy out of being here. For I have often thought, if we can't do something right for the earth here, in this splendid, one-of-a-kind, crown jewel of a valley, then we surely won't do it anywhere. They'll get their way, the money counters: a world devoid of nature, overlain by asphalt and rooftops, a treasury of resources and beauty squandered. All that might be left for us is the knowledge that we were right, that wildness does matter. That's some sad satisfaction.

The refreshing mountain air I found so long ago seems to be gone from the Flathead I now know. We've turned that former positive energy of intelligent and constructive disagreement into commonplace anger and hate; while egoism and diatribes just as quickly lay waste our uniquely western "geography of hope" as apathy and silence ever did. Either way the forests come down, the pavement flows and we awake to less and less of nature each day.

Leo Keane



BEAUTY IS COMPOSED OF MANY THINGS AND NEVER STANDS ALONE. IT IS PART OF HORIZONS , BLUE IN THE DISTANCE, GREAT PRIMEVAL SILENCES, KNOWLEDGE OF ALL THINGS OF THE EARTH... IT IS SO FRAGILE IT CAN BE DESTROYED BY A SOUND OR THOUGHT. IT MAY BE INFINITESIMALLY SMALL OR ENCOMPASS THE UNIVERSE ITSELF. IT COMES IN SWIFT CONCEPTION WHENEVER NATURE HAS NOT BEEN DISTURBED.

FROM REFLECTIONS FROM THE NORTH COUNTRY BY SIGURD OLSON.



5TH ANNUAL GREAT BACKYARD BIRD COUNT

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

The Great Backyard Bird Count has been collecting data about the vast majority of North American birds since 1998. The purpose of the count is to build a continent wide index to help researchers keep tabs on the distribution and abundance of bird populations over time. The GBBC is a unique part of a suite of bird monitoring projects that include Audubon's Christmas Bird Count and the Lab's Project FeederWatch.

In its five-year history, more than 100,000 people have participated in the count. Their reports have led to some interesting findings. The GBBC has indicated a strong correlation between snow depth and the winter distribution of American Robins--GBBC data have shown this traditional "harbinger of spring" occurring in parts of Michigan and other northern locales during winters when snow depth was minimal in those regions. The count has also tracked the arrival of Red-winged Blackbirds and other blackbird species as they return to their breeding grounds.

The GBBC continues to document irruptions of winter finches--Pine Grosbeaks, White-winged Crossbills, Pine Siskins, Evening Grosbeaks, and other species that, like Snowy Owls, typically spend the winter in far northern locales. "This winter is thus far revealing a bounty of winter finches," says Fitzpatrick. "In the Ithaca area, for example, we've been treated to White-Winged Crossbills, Common Redpolls, Evening Grosbeaks, and Pine Grosbeaks. Visits from these rare visitors make the winter especially delightful and give us one more reason to look forward to the Great Backyard Bird Count. We will be interested to see what the GBBC data will tell us about this year's winter finch phenomenon."

To take part in the GBBC, Here is how it works:

- Pick one or more of the days in the count period to watch for birds.
- Spend at least 15 minutes; a half-hour or more is even better -- watching for birds on each day you participate.
- For each day you count, note the high and low temperatures on that date, the weather while you were counting (snow? how many hours?), the habitat where the observation was made, the snow depth and the zip code of your count location. (The zip code is what they use to classify count locations.)
- For each species of bird you see, keep track of the highest number of individuals you observe at any one time.

For example, suppose you watch for birds in your yard on Feb. 20, and you see 2 Mountain Chickadees hanging around your feeder at 10 a.m. Then at 10:15 you see 3 Mountain Chickadees in your yard. After that, only a single

Mountain Chickadee shows up during the rest of the day. You record "3 Mountain Chickadees" for February 20. If then 4 Mountain Chickadees show up together the next day, and no larger groups appear that day, you record "4 Mountain Chickadees" for Feb. 21, but still include "3 Mountain Chickadees" in your report for Feb 20.

- Submit your data over the Internet. Go to the BirdSource web site at www.birdsource.org and click on the appropriate state or province for a checklist of the most frequently reported birds in that region. The survey form asks a few other questions, too, including. The researchers are especially excited to find out what the snow depth data will yield this year--last year, the GBBC collected more than 52,000 snow-depth reports.

Results from the count are updated hourly in the form of animated maps and colorful graphs for all to view online. Participants will be able to see almost immediately how their observations fit into the continent wide perspective. Findings from previous years are also available at the site, as are the ever-popular Top Ten lists.

Complete instructions for participating are available at the web site www.birdsource.org (click on "Great Backyard Bird Count"). There's no fee or registration. People who would like to participate but don't have access to the Internet can use the computers at Flathead Valley Community Library. Or you can call either Linda deKort at 755-3704 or John Ashley at 893-3825 from the FAS Board of Directors and they will be happy to give you a hand. Press release from The Cornell Lab of Ornithology with additional data from Flathead Audubon Society



BIRDSEED FOR SALE !
50 LB BAGS OF BLACK OIL
SUNFLOWER SEED FOR YOUR
FEATHERED FRIENDS AND YOU
WILL BE SUPPORTING FLATHEAD
AUDUBON SOCIETY. \$17.00 PER
BAG. WANT ONE? PLEASE CALL
LINDA WINNIE AT 755-1406.





BIGFORK CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT RESULTS

Saturday, 15 December 2001



The 34 participants in Flathead Audubon's 28th annual Bigfork Christmas Bird Count enjoyed a great holiday tradition. We ended up with 13,462 birds of 82 species, plus another 5 during count week. The weather was pretty much perfect, with highs in the 30's, light wind and lots of sun. Although we did not have the usual large rafts of mixed waterfowl, we tied or set 28-yr high totals for 11 species: Cooper's Hawk (2), Ring-billed Gull (378), Herring Gull (29), Northern Flicker (81), Common Raven (196), Pygmy Nuthatch (148), Townsend's Solitaire (22), American Robin (369), Cedar Waxwing (710), Spotted Towhee (1), and House Sparrow (366). This was only the second time we've had a towhee on the count. The solitaire, robin and Cedar Waxwing numbers all were a result of good fruit crops around the lake; our previous high count for robins was last year's 20! No species were added to our cumulative list for the count, although count week Glaucous Gull and Red-naped Sapsucker were firsts. We also had a nice variety of species that we get only infrequently (grebes, Red-breasted Merganser, Merlin, Marsh Wren, Harris's Sparrow, White-throated Sparrow). Here is the complete count:

Pied-billed Grebe	1	Prairie Falcon	cw	Brown Creeper	14
Horned Grebe	7	falcon, sp.	1	Winter Wren	2
Red-necked Grebe	1	Ring-necked Pheasant	67	Marsh Wren	1
Western Grebe	3	Ruffed Grouse	5	American Dipper	6
Great Blue Heron	4	Wild Turkey	528	Golden-crowned Kinglet	152
Tundra Swan	72	American Coot	1660	Townsend's Solitaire	22
Canada Goose	3202	Ring-billed Gull	378	American Robin	369
Mallard	807	California Gull	19	Bohemian Waxwing	1 312
Northern Pintail	5	Herring Gull	29	Cedar Waxwing	710
Gadwall	cw	Glaucous Gull	cw	Northern Shrike	1
American Wigeon	2	gull, sp.	60	European Starling	187
Redhead	7	Rock Dove	113	Spotted Towhee	1
Ring-necked Duck	3	Mourning Dove	94	American Tree Sparrow	23
Lesser Scaup	1	Belted Kingfisher	9	Harris's Sparrow	1
Common Goldeneye	622	Red-naped Sapsucker	cw	Song Sparrow	24
Barrow's Goldeneye	29	Downy Woodpecker	22	White-throated Sparrow	1
Bufflehead	93	Hairy Woodpecker	17	Dark-eyed Junco	18
Hooded Merganser	45	Northern Flicker	81	Red-winged Blackbird	8
Common Merganser	86	Pileated Woodpecker	10	Pine Grosbeak	63
Red-breasted Merganser	4	Gray Jay	7	Cassin's Finch	8
duck, sp.	40	Steller's Jay	4	House Finch	257
Bald Eagle	44	Blue Jay	5	Red Crossbill	2
Northern Harrier	3	Clark's Nutcracker	4	Common Redpoll	219
Sharp-shinned Hawk	1	Black-billed Magpie	177	Hoary Redpoll	cw
Cooper's Hawk	2	American Crow	28	Pine Siskin	72
Accipiter, sp.	1	Common Raven	196	American Goldfinch	50
Red-tailed Hawk	9	Black-cap. Chickadee	437	Evening Grosbeak	69
Red-t. (Harlan's) Hawk	3	Mountain Chickadee	93	House Sparrow	366
Rough-legged Hawk	29	Chestnut-b. Chickadee	79		
Golden Eagle	1	Red-br. Nuthatch	106	Total Species	82 (5 cw)
American Kestrel	1	White-br. Nuthatch	1	Total Ind.:	13,462
Merlin	1	Pygmy Nuthatch	148		



For more information, contact: Daniel Casey, American Bird Conservancy, 33 Second St. East, Kalispell, MT 59901 (406)756-2681; (406)756-2682(fax); dancasey_abc@centurytel.net



KALISPELL CHRISTMAS (NEW YEAR'S) BIRD COUNT

Sunday, 30 December 2001

TOTALS: 66 species (plus 1 count week); 22,311 individuals. We had 28 observers in 7 parties on our third Kalispell CBC, even though the weather was a bit cooler than the Bigfork count. We set or tied new (3-yr) count highs for 29 species, and added 5 species (in **bold**) to our cumulative list for the count circle, which now stands at 90 species (including our unofficial pilot year). Highlights included what is likely to be a continental high of 11,059 (!) Bohemian Waxwings, 2 Wood Ducks, 5 Merlins, 473 Mourning Doves, 97 Pygmy Nuthatches, 6 Hoary Redpolls, and two individual blackbird species (Common Grackle, Rusty Blackbird) never seen in 28 years on the Bigfork count.



Pied-billed Grebe	cw	Gray Jay	2
Great Blue Heron	3	Blue Jay	11
Canada Goose	1082	Black-billed Magpie	232
Wood Duck	2	American Crow	241
Green-winged Teal	3	Common Raven	214
Mallard	3825	Black-capped Chickadee	348
Gadwall	3	Mountain Chickadee	69
American Wigeon	1	Red-breasted Nuthatch	27
Common Goldeneye	51	White-breasted Nuthatch	2
Bufflehead	6	Pygmy Nuthatch	97
Common Merganser	2	Brown Creeper	1
duck, species	58	American Dipper	3
Bald Eagle	48	Golden-crowned Kinglet	4
Northern Harrier	1	Townsend's Solitaire	1
Sharp-shinned Hawk	1	American Robin	186
Red-tailed Hawk	23	Bohemian Waxwing	11059
Red-tailed "Harlan's" Hawk	3	Cedar Waxwing	303
Rough-legged Hawk	34	Northern Shrike	2
Buteo, species	1	European Starling	654
Golden Eagle	2	American Tree Sparrow	35
American Kestrel	1	Song Sparrow	24
Merlin	5	White-crowned Sparrow	5
Prairie Falcon	1	Dark-eyed Junco	44
Gray Partridge	27	Red-winged Blackbird	160
Ring-necked Pheasant	47	Common Grackle	1
Ruffed Grouse	3	Rusty Blackbird	1
Wild Turkey	60	Pine Grosbeak	6
Ring-billed Gull	93	House Finch	758
Rock Dove	332	Common Redpoll	505
Mourning Dove	473	Hoary Redpoll	6
Great Horned Owl	1	Pine Siskin	94
Belted Kingfisher	10	American Goldfinch	58
Downy Woodpecker	21	Evening Grosbeak	52
Hairy Woodpecker	6	House Sparrow	740
Northern Flicker	134		
Pileated Woodpecker	2		



Contact: Dan Casey, American Bird Conservancy, 33 Second St. East, Kalispell, 59901 (phone: 406-756-2681; fax: 406-756-2682; dancasey_abc@centurytel.net)



THE ARCTIC NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE

The Arctic National Wildlife Refuge is the largest of Alaska's 16 National Wildlife Refuges, as well as the nation's largest and northernmost refuge. Situated in the far northeast corner of Alaska, the Arctic Refuge is considered the finest wilderness sanctuary for Arctic wildlife in the world. The migratory barren-ground caribou is one example of a species that depends on this northernmost sanctuary. Each year, the Porcupine Caribou herd, 130,000 strong, embarks on a dramatic migration to the Arctic Refuge's coastal plain, an ancestral breeding ground, where the herd is renewed with the birth of calves.

The Arctic Refuge represents the essence of wilderness, where the forces of nature prevail without human intrusion or manipulation. Because of a unique combination of landscape features, the Refuge possesses the greatest diversity of Arctic animal and plant life of any conservation area in the U.S. It is home for all three species of North American bears – grizzly bears, black bears, and polar bears. The coastal plain of the Arctic Refuge – where drilling is threatened -- also provides habitat for the highest denning concentration of polar bears in America's Arctic.

Each spring, millions of migratory birds journey from their wintering grounds to the Arctic Refuge -- their breeding grounds. Here the birds can nest in safety and rear their young. More than 125 bird species travel thousands of miles from all over the world to the refuge's coastal plain. In North America, the birds fly along four main routes known as 'flyways' - the Atlantic, Central, Mississippi and Pacific. One record holder in long-distance travel is the Arctic Tern. This graceful bird makes an annual round-trip of about 25,000 miles between opposite ends of the globe, from its Arctic breeding grounds to Antarctica. Other migratory species include numerous waterfowl, Tundra Swan, Golden Eagle, Red-Throated Loon, and the Peregrine Falcon.



CONGRESS SET TO RETURN TO ACTION ON JANUARY 23rd

The U.S. Congress is set to return to Capitol Hill on January 23rd and topping the action agenda is the issue of opening the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge to oil and gas drilling. Congressional insiders report that the U.S. Senate may take up and vote on this issue before President's Day Weekend - that's February 15th!

The Senate is expected to debate the issue as part of an overall energy package, a bill which will include issues such as energy conservation, renewable energy and fuel efficiency standards. At present, there are two sweeping energy bills pending in the Senate - the House-passed version, which includes a provision to open the Arctic Refuge to oil and gas drilling (HR 4), and a proposal put forward by Majority Leader Tom Daschle (D-South Dakota) which does not include any Arctic provisions. If the Daschle proposal moves first, you can bet the pro-drilling contingent in the Senate will do all they can to see that drilling provisions are included in the proposal. And they won't stop there! Much like we saw last year, pro-drilling Senators will work to attach drilling provisions to any and all bills that reach the Senate floor.

As you know, our efforts to protect the Arctic fell short in the House, as too many Representatives bowed to the political pressure of powerful pro-drilling special interests. The only way we can effectively compete with this pressure is with constituent support - that's you! The House has already passed this measure, the President fully supports opening the Arctic to drilling - the U.S. Senate is the last hope!

As someone concerned about the fate of the Arctic, you are needed to get involved and help convince your two U.S. Senators to oppose any and all efforts to open the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge to oil and gas drilling. Listed below you'll find a list of those Senators who haven't made a final decision as to where they stand on the issue of the Arctic - it's those Senators who will likely determine the fate of this Refuge! Check below to see if one of them represents you. And here are a few ideas as to what you can do to help protect the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge today!

(1) CALL YOUR TWO U.S. SENATORS AND URGE THEM TO OPPOSE ANY AND ALL EFFORTS TO OPEN THE ARCTIC REFUGE TO OIL DRILLING!

Based on the time frame of this vote (possibly three weeks away) and the fact that lawmakers are still not receiving mail on a regular basis, and have fallen way behind in addressing e-mails, your phone calls are the best way to ensure your message is received. You can reach your lawmakers by calling (202) 224-3121 and ask for your Senators by name. Best time to call: between 9:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. EST.

(2) GET YOUR FRIENDS/FAMILY MEMBERS TO CALL! Encourage your family and friends to call as well! Those 10 calls will ensure your lawmakers

understand there is strong opposition to this issue at home! Remember, it's said that every call received represents the views of 100 constituents...so those 10 calls represent the views of 1000 constituents!

(3) ORDER YOUR FREE ARCTIC POSTCARDS - pre-printed postcards with messages urging your Senators to protect the Arctic. Get your family and friends to sign them, and then send your completed postcards back to us so our lobbyists can hand deliver them! Just click this link and let us know how many postcards you would like, and the address where we need to send them!

From (audubonaction@audubon.org)

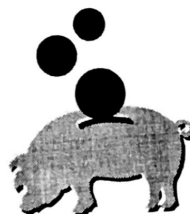
BOTH ARTICLES CAN BE FOUND ON THE AUDUBON WEBSITE AT WWW.AUDUBON.ORG, CLICK ON PROTECT THE ARCTIC



FINANCES OF THE FLATHEAD AUDUBON SOCIETY

FISCAL YEAR 1-JUL-01 TO 30-JUN-02

	BUDGETED	ACTUAL
INCOME		
DUES	\$2347	\$2347
RAFFLE	\$400	\$208
DONATIONS TO FAS	\$3195	\$1975
GENERAL SALES	\$600	\$250
BIRD SEED SALES	\$7000	\$6273
OTHER	\$120	\$298
MEMBERSHIP GRANT	\$1500	\$798
TOTAL INCOME	\$15,162	\$12,149
EXPENSES		
OUR DONATIONS TO OTHERS		
BOOKS	\$500	
AUDUBON ADV	\$1100	\$955
GRANTS	\$1090	\$250
NATIONAL AUDUBON	\$750	\$571
MT AUDUBON	\$1,000	
SCHOLARSHIPS	\$500	
TOTAL DONATIONS	\$4940	\$1776
FEES (Speakers, etc.)	\$670	\$50
INSURANCE	\$580	
INVENTORY	\$400	\$212
BIRD SEED	\$4200	\$4444
OFFICE	\$670	\$186
NEWSLETTER	\$2940	\$1685
TRAVEL	\$212	
OWEN SOWERWINE	\$550	\$540
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$15,162	\$8,893
ASSETS		
		13-JAN-02
OPERATING FUND		
WHITEFISH CREDIT UNION		\$5050
BIRDSEED		\$1598
GLACIER BANK		\$1916
MONEY MARKET		\$4200
DOMINI SOCIAL INV		\$4374
BARB BAXTER ACTION FUND		\$8930
IN DOMINI SOCIAL INV		
CONSERVATION FUND		\$25,211
IN MUTUAL FUNDS		
TOTAL OF ALL ASSETS		\$51,279



OF SPECIAL NOTE: CELEBRATING CONSERVATION CONFERENCE WILL BE HELD
ON APRIL 20TH STAY TUNED FULL DETAILS COMING IN THE MARCH PILEATED POST



FLATHEAD AUDUBON SOCIETY DIRECTORY

OFFICERS

President	Linda Winnie, P.O. Box 220, Kila, MT 59920	755-1406
Vice-President	Sonja Hartmann, P.O. Box 316, West Glacier, MT 59936	250-7885
Secretary	Gail Sullivan, 932 Columbia Ave., Whitefish, MT 59937	862-5775
Treasurer	Bruce Tannehill, 239 Deer Trail, Whitefish, MT 59937	862-4548
Past-President	Neal Brown, 670 Wolf Creek Dr., Bigfork, MT 59911	837-5018

DIRECTORS

1999-2002	Linda deKort, 1290 Lost Creek Dr., Kalispell, MT 59901	755-3704
1999-2002	Leslie Kehoe, 1020 Holt Dr., Bigfork, MT 59911	837-4467
2000-2003	John Ashley, 3151 Columbia Falls Stage Rd., Col. Falls MT 59912	892-3825
2001-2002	Leo Keane, 514 Pine Place, Whitefish MT 59937	862-5807
2001-2002	Jill Fanning, 380 Tally Lake Rd., Whitefish, 59937	862-8070
2001-2002	Brent Mitchell, 960 Kienas Rd., Kalispell, MT 59901	756-8130
2001-2003	Bob Lopp, 52 West View Drive, Kalispell, MT 59901	257-6886
2001-2004	Dan Casey, P.O. Box 355, Somers MT 59932	857-3143
2001-2004	Jane Adams, 229 Edgewood Dr., Kalispell MT 59901	257-4527
2002-2003	Ferne Cohen, P.O. Box 1782, Whitefish, MT 55537	862-2028

CHAIRS

Audubon Adventures	Kim Davis, 1230 Rhodes Draw, Kalispell, MT 59901	755-1311
Birdseed Sales	June and Rod Ash, P.O. Box 1129, Condon MT 59826	754-2289
Christmas Bird Count	Dan Casey, P.O. Box 355, Somers MT 59932	857-3143
Conservation	Brent Mitchell, 960 Kienas Rd., Kalispell, MT 59901	756-8130
Education	Sonja Hartmann, P.O. Box 316, West Glacier, MT 59936	250-7885
Field Trips	Jim Swab, 988 Lake Drive, Columbia Falls, MT 59912	387-4299
Hospitality	Lois Drobish, 324 Helena Flats Rd. Kalispell, MT 59901	756-7405
	Judy Spence, Box 239, Lakeside MT 59922	857-2599
	Pattie Brown, 760 Wolf Creek Dr., Bigfork, MT 59911	837-5018
Librarian	Gail Leonard, 514 Pine Place, Whitefish, MT 59937	862-5807
Membership	Jill and Mike Fanning, 380 Tally Lake Rd., Whitefish, 59937	862-8070
Newsletter	Leslie Kehoe, 1020 Holt Dr., Bigfork, MT 59911	837-4467
Program	Leo Keane, 514 Pine Place, Whitefish, MT 59937	862-5807
Publicity	Jeannie Marcure, 300 Shelter Valley Dr., Kalispell, MT 59901	755-1808
	Karen Nichols, 920 6 th Ave. E., Kalispell, MT 59901	756-5763
Refuge Projects	Leslie Kehoe, 1020 Holt Dr., Bigfork MT 59911	837-4467
Wetland/Waterfowl	Neal Brown, 670 Wolf Creek Rd., Bigfork, MT 59911	867-5018

MONTANA AUDUBON

State Office	Ray Johnson, P.O. Box 596, Helena, MT 59624	443-3949
Western Montana Office	Loren Flynn, PO Box 831, Stevensville MT 59870	777-0780
Board President	Jim Brown, 1504 Woods Gulch Road, Missoula MT 59802	549-8052

The Flathead Audubon Society is affiliated with the National Audubon Society and meets on the second Monday of each month from September through May. The regular meeting starts at 7:30 p.m. and includes a featured guest who will present a conservation or nature program. The regular monthly meeting is preceded by the Executive Board meeting. Both meetings are open to all those interested.

THE PILEATED POST is published September through May and is sent to members of the Flathead Audubon Society as a membership benefit. Subscriptions for non-members are \$10.00 per year.

Deadline for newsletter copy: the 20th of each month. Newsletter e-mail ljkehoe@digisys.net

National Audubon Society
Membership Application

Enjoy full National Audubon Society benefits and AUDUBON magazine, as well as PILEATED POST newsletter.

Check your category rate from the following:

First-time Applicant	\$20	<input type="checkbox"/>
Student	\$15	<input type="checkbox"/>
Individual Renewal	\$35	<input type="checkbox"/>
Family	\$38	<input type="checkbox"/>
Senior	\$15	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sustaining	\$50	<input type="checkbox"/>
Supporting	\$100	<input type="checkbox"/>
Life	\$1500	<input type="checkbox"/>
Dual Life	\$2000	<input type="checkbox"/>

Name _____

Address _____

City _____

State _____ Zip _____

Send this application and your check to:

National Audubon Society
Chapter Membership Data Center
P.O. Box 51001
Boulder, CO 80322-1001

For Newsletter Only Send \$10 ☐

to: Flathead Audubon Society Membership
380 Tally Lake Rd.,
Whitefish, MT 59937

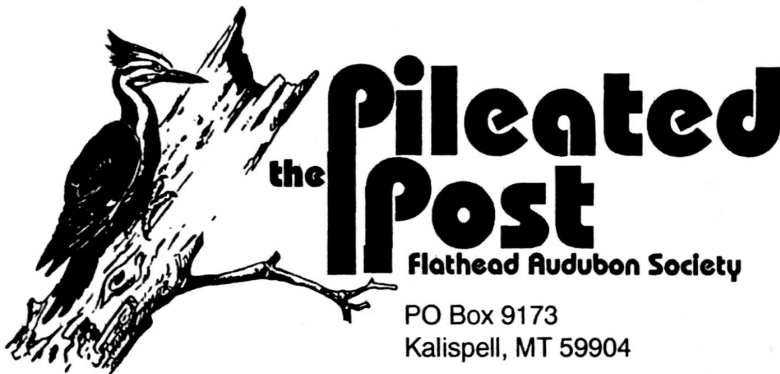
For address change, call 1-800-274-4201

N54 7XCHA



FEBRUARY, 2002

Non-Profit Org.
Postage Paid
Permit No. 115
Kalispell, MT
59901-9173



PO Box 9173
Kalispell, MT 59904