



the

Pileated Post

Newsletter of the Flathead Audubon Society

Volume 16

Number 2

February, 1991

Mark Your Calendar

FEBRUARY

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3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	(11)	12	13	14	15	(16)
17	18	19	20	21	(22)	(23)
24	25	26	27	28		

2/11/91 - BOARD OF DIRECTORS DINNER
MEETING, 5 pm, at the Bigfork Inn in Bigfork.
Everyone welcome to attend.

REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING: United Methodist Church, Commerce & Electric Avenues, Bigfork. Business Meeting: 7:30 pm. Open to all. Program: 8 pm.

Program: Wendel Hann, Ecosystem Management Group Leader for the U. S. Forest Service, Northern Region, Missoula, will give a presentation on "The Management of Ecosystems Using a Biodiversity Approach."

2/16/91 - Montana Audubon Lobbying Day in Helena. Meet at the Audubon office (324 Fuller Avenue) at 8:30 am. For more information, see the January newsletter or call 443-3949.

Also 2/16/91 - A Special Program on the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge at Flathead Valley Community College in Kalispell. See page 2 for details.

2/22/91 - "Forestry in Finland and Sweden", a slide presentation in Whitefish. See page 2 for details.

2/23/91 - Open House by the Natural Resources Department of the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes in Pablo. See page 2 for details.

Glacier Park Fire Plan Ready For Review

Superintendent Gil Lusk released the Fire Management Plan for Glacier National Park recently, and the new plan does not differ significantly from the former plan.

Lusk indicated that comments received on the recently released Environmental Assessment were minimal and the new drafted plan is based upon the preferred alternative. This alternative allows for full fire suppression, management ignited burns and for allowing naturally ignited fires to burn under certain conditions.

The 30-day opportunity to comment on the drafted plan will extend through **February 8**. Copies of the plan may be obtained by writing: Superintendent, Glacier National Park, West Glacier, Montana 59936 or by calling park headquarters at 888-5441.

Board Responds To Members' Comments

A few months ago, President Brent Mitchell asked for comments from members about meeting locations and several post cards were received in response.

Since the area covered by the Flathead Audubon is vast and the membership is somewhat scattered, the Board of Directors voted to hold some of the meetings in places other than Bigfork. The May meeting will be held at the Lone Pine Visitor Center in Kalispell. The September meeting will also be held at the Center. Reminders will be included in the newsletter calendars when the time comes.

Thank you for your comments and President Brent says to keep those cards a-comin'.



Through The Editor's Spotting Scope

Not long ago I read an article in Bird Watcher's Digest about a birder who sets a goal for himself when he takes a walk: to see at least 25 species of birds during his day in the field. A short time after reading the article, I had occasion to drive to Helena from Big Arm and decided to set a goal for myself. Instead of just noticing birds as I drove along, I would keep track of them and see how many species I could spot while driving along the highway. No stopping or slowing -- just driving.

My trip list included the following: Canada geese flying overhead; mallards at Ninepipe; a ring-necked pheasant headed for cover; a rough-legged hawk perched on a power pole; a flock of evening grosbeaks (have they taken over the bird world?); and pigeons alongside the road (are they rock doves?)



The prize of the day was spotted in the median. As I approached, I could see a lump near the edge of the road: the carcass of a deer. Perched on top, staking his claim and defending it, was a golden eagle. About six feet beyond were three common ravens, waiting their turn. The impact of the dramatic scene was immediate and the circumstances needed no explanation. A cycle of nature was displayed on U. S. Highway 90.

Although my list was about one-third of that of the birder in the article, the effort made the trip more interesting and got my mind focused. I was taking my grandson to the Helena airport, so he could catch an air transport that would return him to his Army Reserve unit, scheduled to leave for Saudi Arabia in a matter of days.

A good relationship with birds makes a trip more interesting and can help to ease life's tensions. Today, when all ears and eyes are drawn to radio and television newscasts, the daily trip to replenish the bird feeders is like a respite in a world intensified by war. There is a calmness experienced in that simple chore. The latest news from the Gulf does not affect our feathered friends, and perhaps that's another reason why the friendship should be nurtured and savored.

Sharon Bergman

Special Arctic Program Scheduled

"The Last Great Wilderness", a special slide presentation, will be presented at 7:30 pm, Saturday, **February 16**, at Flathead Valley Community College in the large conference room #123 of the Learning Resource Center. The program features the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge and is sponsored by Flathead Audubon Society and the Montana Wilderness Association on behalf of the Northern Alaska Environmental Center and the Alaska Conservation Foundation.

Two years in the making, this multi-projector slide presentation combines the work of twelve wilderness photographers to provide a closeup look at the fragile and beautiful refuge in northeast Alaska.

Featured speakers are wilderness expedition leaders, professional photographers and wildlife biologists.

Program Features Scandinavian Forestry

"Forestry in Finland and Sweden", a slide presentation and commentary by Ron Buenteimeier will be given on **February 22** in the North Valley Hospital Community Room in Whitefish. The program will start at 7 pm and will last about two hours. For more information, call 862-3897.

Open House By The Confederated Tribes

An open house will be held by the Natural Resources Department of the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes at the department's offices in Pablo on Saturday, **February 23** from 10 am to 4 pm.

The purpose of the open house is to provide an opportunity to tour the Natural Resources Department office, meet with staff members of the various programs and learn about the functions of these programs.



President's Corner

The Process - The Hassle - and the Appeal.

Public resource agencies are required to make plans and submit them to the public for review and comment. Flathead Audubon is a segment of that public. Historically, our group has commented on these plans and continues to do so. From my perspective, the intent of the process is good, but the mechanics need to be improved.

When problems arise in "the plan" (USFS, FLM, FWP, etc.), citizens ask questions and eventually an EIS (Environmental Impact Study) is started. In the EIS draft stage, the public (citizen) is invited to comment. The comments are taken by the agency and filed, and quite often the final EIS looks almost exactly like the draft EIS. Almost nothing has changed.

So the citizens ask the same questions of the plan again (hassle). They are told, "You had your input, we thanked you for it, but the final EIS shall not be amended. After all, these things take years and mega-bucks to produce." The citizens appeal, the plan is stopped and all sides are drawn into battle. After more of the agency's time and resources are spent trying to defend the EIS, or usually a few parts of it, the agency loses the appeal, and the citizens collapse, exhausted, muttering, "I told you so." The court makes the agency do what the citizens wanted in the first place and life goes on ... with a few hard feelings between the citizens and the agency.

Let's reduce the hassle. Let's change the process. Get the citizen (public) involved in the very beginning so concerns can be addressed as the plan evolves, not after it has taken form. When citizens have an opportunity to work through problems, plans, ideas and methods from the beginning, they will often (and rightly) consider the new plan as something of their own making and will give it their support.

It's my belief that most citizen groups would rather spend their energy working with the agencies than against them. This thought applies to the USFS, FWP, Highway Dept., etc., and the citizen may be an individual, environmental group or employee.

Let's get the public involved in the beginning or we will continue to live with hassles, complaints and appeals right up to the end. And when the end comes, the public will win. The citizens who file appeals did not "just fall off the turnip truck". They are intelligent, dedicated people who are willing to make the personal sacrifice necessary to see the problem through to the end.

Every situation and plan doesn't go through this scenario, of course. We only hear about the ones that do. Nevertheless, it's time for the agencies to modernize the process by involving the public early on. It would change the process, reduce the hassle and eliminate the need for appeals. We would all stand to benefit from that.

Brent Mitchell



From: Montana Audubon Council

For legislative information, feel free to write or call the Helena Audubon office: P. O. Box 595, Helena MT 59624; phone: 443-3949. To call TOLL FREE at the capitol for bill dates, numbers, etc.: 1-800-237-5079. To write your legislators or the governor, send the letter to: Capitol Station, Helena, MT 59620.

To date, Janet Ellis, Montana Audubon Lobbyist, has testified on five bills:

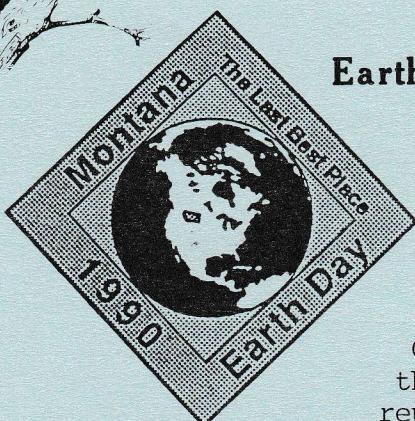
HB 89 - Changing Fish and Game Commission name to "Fish and Wildlife and Parks Commission" - Passed in House Committee.

HB 88 - Allowing houndsmen to hunt bears - Tabled.

SB 13 - Remove Sunset of Habitat Acquisition - Still in Committee.

HB 161 - Waste discharge regulation - Still in Committee.

HB 160 - Solid Waste Reduction Program for State - Still in Committee.



Earth Day Continued

RECYCLING. We all know it's time to begin. We all know it makes for a cleaner environment and helps conserve wildlife habitat. It is even becoming a money-making or at least break-even proposition. So where do we begin?

That's a question a group of local citizens has begun to seriously try to answer. Calling themselves the Flathead Community Recycling Coalition, the group knows that educating the public about the needs to reduce waste (like packaging), reuse materials when possible (like cloth diapers), or recycle are very important.

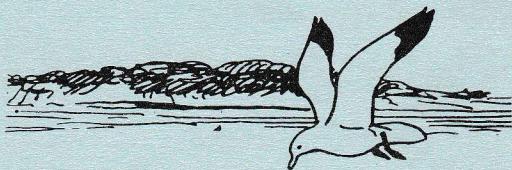
It is also known that an estimated 60% of the materials now going into the county landfill are currently recyclable items, including food and yard waste, paper, plastic, glass and aluminum. A future is envisioned where landfills are obsolete and old landfills are mined for their buried resources. So where do we begin?

As a first step, North Valley Refuge, WeeHaul and Evergreen Disposal have offered to place and service recycling bins for paper, glass and aluminum at local supermarkets in Whitefish, Kalispell and Columbia Falls beginning in early spring. Children for Wildlife and other volunteers will initially be present at these bins to encourage and educate people about their use. Secondly, the coalition will continue to explore with the County Refuse Board rate structures which encourage recycling and feasible options for separating recyclables from the county's waste stream.

That is where it's begun. You are encouraged to attend the coalition meetings or the monthly County Refuse Board meetings (every 4th Tuesday).

The input and support of all community groups and/or individuals is encouraged. For more information, call Mayre Flowers, 755-4521, or Ferne Cohen, 862-2028. It's easy for you to get involved.

Mayre Flowers



Polebridge Bird Count Tally

Daniel and Carol Owens of Polebridge reported on the success of the Christmas Bird Count for the North Fork of the Flathead River count circle. Eight hardy souls braved the sub zero temperatures to tally the following 24 species and 127 individuals.

Bald Eagle	1 A	Clark's Nutcracker	1
Northern Goshawk	1	Black-billed Magpie	7
Golden Eagle	1 imm.	Common Raven	19
Spruce Grouse	2	Black-capped Chickadee	3
Ruffed Grouse	2	Mountain Chickadee	14
Belted Kingfisher	1	Red-breasted Nuthatch	4
Downy Woodpecker	4	Brown Creeper	6
Hairy Woodpecker	13	American Dipper	2
Three-toed Woodpecker	4	Northern Shrike	1
Pileated Woodpecker	1	Pine Grosbeak	5
Gray Jay	7	Red Crossbill	17
Steller's Jay	3	Evening Grosbeak	5



Members Of The Month

** Ursula & Jack Whitney **

They are native Montanans.

Jack was born in Ronan, but his earliest memories are of Bigfork where he was raised, schooled and, ultimately, made his living. Ursula was originally from eastern Montana, south of Malta, and her family moved to Bigfork while she was still a young girl. They met in high school, attending the newly-built Bigfork High School, and were married five years later. That was some 52 years ago.

Jack is a woodsman who spent most of his life in the woods and in working with wood. He and his father built many of the log cabins and homes in the Bigfork area. His primary business was a lumber mill for moulding. As a sideline, he built bird houses and feeders.

"We've always had birds around," Ursula commented. "Jack can imitate bird sounds and they respond to him. People knew we had bird feeders on our place and everyone would ask what kind of birds came in. Our knowledge of birds just seemed to grow. Children in the neighborhood would bring us injured birds and we did what we could to help them heal."

In 1972 or '73, a meeting was set up for all those in the area who were interested in birds and birding. Ursula was one of those who worked quietly in the background, making telephone calls, putting items in the newspaper and making necessary arrangements to get the club going. A few years later, the group became affiliated with the National Audubon Society and became known as the Flathead Audubon Society. Jack served as a director on the board of directors for a number of years and his knowledge of birds and the woods was utilized when he conducted field trips for the chapter. Jack and Ursula continue to serve in whatever capacity they can.

For a sense of Montana and birds in their natural state, talk to Jack and Ursula Whitney -- Flathead Audubon Members of the Month.



NATIONAL AUDUBON SOCIETY CHAPTER MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Enjoy full National Audubon Society benefits—and AUDUBON magazine—at a special new-member rate of \$20.

Mail to:
Flathead Audubon Society
P.O. Box 715
Bigfork, Montana 59911

Name _____

Address _____

City _____

State / Zip _____

Payment enclosed Bill Me

Allow 4-6 weeks for first issue of AUDUBON
Membership dues include \$20 for AUDUBON magazine.

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absorbing articles
in AUDUBON magazine.

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activities.

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sanctuaries.

INVITATIONS to Audubon's ecology
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DISCOUNTS on nature books,
collectibles and gifts. And with
your membership you're supporting
the National Audubon Society's
vital efforts at protecting wildlife
and environment.



Peopling For Audubon

Flathead Audubon has a program of service to communities in the form of special presentations to classrooms, service clubs and other organizations. Jean Robocker, who is in charge of the program for schools and clubs, stated that two or three requests are received each month and volunteers are needed to assist in making the presentations. She has a library of slides and a projector, as well as the collection of bird skins, that can be used to illustrate a presentation on birds and birding.

If you're looking for something that will enhance your Audubon membership by making a personal contribution; if you like people (young and old and all in between) and are comfortable talking to them; if you have the time to discuss and explain why you like birds, and you'd like to share that interest with others, then perhaps volunteering for this project might be just right for you. Call Jean Robocker, 756-6344, for full details.



1990 Flathead Audubon Society Directory

OFFICERS

President
Vice president
Secretary
Treasurer

DIRECTORS

**Montana
Bird Hotline**
721-2935

Brent Mitchell, 960 Kienas Rd, Kalispell, MT 59901	756-8130
Leo Keane, 514 Pine Place, Whitefish, MT 59937	862-5807
Gail Leonard, 514 Pine Place, Whitefish, MT 59937	862-5807
Tommie Clark, 231 Pine Needle Ln, Bigfork, MT 59911	837-6615

Ferne Cohen, P. O. Box 1782, Whitefish, MT 59937	862-2028
Dick Fretheim, 904 Woodland Ave, Kalispell, MT 59901	755-5768
Lynn Kelly, 905B 5th Ave. E, Polson, MT 59860	883-5797
Robin Magaddino, 2100 Swan Hwy, Bigfork, MT 59911	837-4294
Ed Prach, 110 Goat Trail, Whitefish, MT 59937	862-1350
Bob Shennum, 2888 Swan Hwy, Bigfork, MT 59911	837-6208

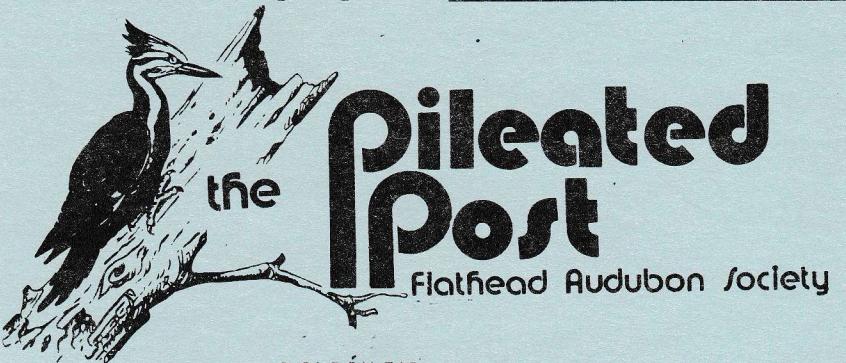
CHAIRS

Audubon Adventures
Conservation
Field Trips
Hospitality/Sales
Hostess
Librarian
Membership
Newsletter
Program
Refuge Projects
Schools/Clubs

Kim Davis, 4870 Hwy 93S, #62, Whitefish, MT 59937	862-7350
Rod Ash, P. O. Box 1129, Condon, MT 59826	754-2289
Dan Casey, P. O. Box 2922, Kalispell, MT 59901	857-3143
Pattie Brown, 560 Wolf Creek Dr, Bigfork, MT 59911	837-5018
Evelyn Kile, 20 Hoffman Draw, Kila, MT 59920	892-4864
Marie Shirley, 1016A Park Ave, Whitefish, MT 59937	862-0790
June Ash, P. O. Box 1129, Condon, MT 59826	754-2289
Sharon Bergman, 354 LaBella Ln, Big Arm, MT 59910	849-5286
Ferne Cohen, P. O. Box 1782, Whitefish, MT 59937	862-2028
Bob Ballou, Rt 1, Box 11881, Charlo, MT 59825	644-2365
Jean Robocker, 1655 Montford Rd, Kalispell, MT 59901	756-6344

THE FLATHEAD AUDUBON SOCIETY meets on the second Monday of each month from September through May at the United Methodist Church in Bigfork. The business meeting is held at 7:30 pm, followed by a special program at 8 pm. The regular monthly meetings are preceded by an Executive Board meeting, the time and place of which are published in the preceding newsletter. These meetings are open to all interested people.

THE PILEATED POST is published nine times a year, September through May, and is sent to Flathead Audubon Society members as a membership benefit. Subscriptions for non-members are \$5 per year. Deadline for newsletter copy: the 20th of each month.



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