



Pileated Post

Newsletter of the Flathead Audubon Society

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Senate All Wet on Wetlands

Hearings took place in late July on S 851, the Senate wetlands bill. S 851 is very similar to the wetlands provisions contained in HR 961, the House "Dirty Water" Bill which passed in May and which Clinton has vowed to veto. The bill proposes a redefinition of wetlands.

The EPA and the Army Corps of Engineers estimate that the new definition would eliminate between 60 and 75 percent of the nation's remaining wetlands from protection under the Clean Water Act. Unlike HR 961, the senate bill would not require compensation to landowners whose property values were diminished by wetlands regulations. Senate action on redefining wetlands is possible in September, although it could slip into October. It's important to stop this attempt to define millions of acres of these precious habitats out of existence.

Action: Write or call your Senators and tell them you oppose S 851. Ask them to reject changes to wetlands definitions that undermine protections for wetlands. Tell them how much the local wetlands mean to you.

Plovers Sighted

On the local front, Dan Stoker reports sighting four Black-bellied Plovers at Pablo Reservoir in the latter part of September. These plovers are rare for this part of the country and the sighting was quite a feather in Dan's birding cap.

A Species Extinction Act or What?

House Resources Committee Chairman Don Young (R-AK) and Don Pombo (R-CA) dropped in their Endangered Species Act reauthorization bill in early September, after much delay. HR 2275 significantly weakens protection for threatened and endangered species by making their recovery discretionary to the Secretary of Interior or Commerce.

In addition, endangered vertebrate populations such as wolves, grizzly bears and salmon will no longer be protected. Critical habitat for species cannot be designated without the consent of a property owner or without payment of compensation. Destroying a listed species habitat on private land will no longer be illegal.

In addition, the bill includes a fiscally irresponsible takings provision that requires the federal government to compensate private property owners, or buy their land, if restrictions diminish the value of the land by 20% and 50% or more, respectively.

Action: Write or call your Representative to ask for opposition to HR 2275, the Young-Pombo ESA bill.



...It's important to stop this attempt to define millions of acres of these precious habitats out of existence.

Inside This Issue

| | |
|----------------------------|--------|
| Meeting Notice | page 2 |
| Bird Sightings Wanted | page 5 |
| Arctic Refuge Under Attack | page 6 |



The President's Page *R*

The longer I'm in this business of watching birds the more I expect to be surprised. This was brought to mind at the September Audubon meeting as we shared the past summer bird observations. A West Valley man reported his most significant bird "non-sighting": the total absence of tree swallows at his bird boxes, where normally they would be as busy as bees around the houses all summer. "My gosh, are we loosing our swallows now too?" he asked.

Good question. Given the worrisome statistics about our declining neotropical migrants, particularly those species dependent on forest and grassland habitats in both their summer and winter ranges, such as the tree swallow, we might well be witnessing the beginning of the end of some of our favorite summertime birds. Or it might be a statistical blip. In this case, after others reported seeing normal or even more than normal, numbers of tree swallows, I favor the blip theory. Maybe this year's swallows found more and better bugs out in the valley or freshly painted nest boxes with new roofs and air-conditioning.

The point is, every year it is something different out there in bird world. We short-lived humans catch snapshots of the earth's great cycles and think we're seen it all. One year we'll witness a joyful abundance of birdlife in the backyard and decide everything must be right with the world. The next year, the birds are mysteriously absent. It's like Silent Spring all over again and we become prophets of doom. After 35 years of being keenly aware of the birds around me I'm finally realizing there is a lot I don't see, and will never know, and that's what I love about this game.

Last summer, for example, we were inundated with red crossbills. They



twittered in the treetops. They littered the forest floor. I hosed down droves of them at the bird bath where they lined up along its rim like gleeful children. Crossbill city last year; the occasional crossbill this year. Where did they all come from and where have they all gone?

I vividly remember the winter of the Clark's Nutcracker invasion. Usually a bird of the high alpine, that season Clark's Nutcrackers descended on our bird feeders and grazed around the yard looking as big as Holsteins. From then on I've awaited the return of those wintering nutcrackers - and haven't seen them since! Another snapshot, a vignette of the mysterious Clark's Nutcracker cycle.

Early this morning I took my cup of coffee out on the deck and sat under the departing moon. To my left, the gray light of dawn was lifting the eastern sky. To my right, our patch of dark woods. Orion above and a scattering of stars. I sipped and listened quietly.

As morning seeped into my senses I noticed the soft calls of birds passing overhead: a peep here, then there, another over there, as scattered as the stars. Unseen, unknown, unheard - except by one sleepy bird lover. The most beautiful mystery of all passed by in the morning sky, a single moment in the sweeping cycle of bird life.

Once again I'm thankful to have been there and noticed.

Leo Keane

Precycle Program Scheduled

The Precycle Program, which will urge shoppers to think before they buy and reduce waste, will commence in October at the Whitefish Safeway and Food Depot stores. Training of volunteers is planned. For further information, contact Ferne Cohen at 862-2028.

After 35 years of being keenly aware of the birds around me, I'm finally realizing there is a lot I don't see, and will never know, and that's what I love about this game.



In Memorium: Bob Fields

We lost a good friend.

Bob Fields was fairly new to our community, having moved north of Bigfork in 1993. But he and his wife Charlotte made their presence known at the regular monthly Audubon meetings. Their interest in conservation issues was immediately apparent and they weren't strangers to Audubon as they had belonged to a chapter while living in Anacortes, WA. Bob supervised an inventory of a nearby wetlands which was conducted by the local chapter.

As a member of Flathead Audubon, Bob served on the Planning Committee and on Fund Raising. He and Charlotte volunteered to work with the Spring Council Meeting Committee, but his illness cut short their participation. Bob, 74, died of pancreatic cancer on August 23.

He served in the Army Air Force in 1945, and after discharge earned a Bachelor's degree in paleontology from the University of California, Berkeley. He joined the University of Montana Geology Dept in 1955 and became Professor Emeritus in 1982, continuing to teach parttime until 1987 when he moved to Anacortes.

He is remembered as an extraordinary mentor by his graduate students and by the many undergraduates who went on to complete higher degrees in vertebrate paleontology at other universities.

He is remembered by his many friends in Flathead Audubon and he is missed.



Don't Forget to Order Your Winter Supply of Birdseed.

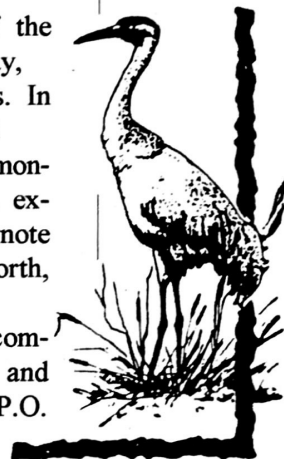
See the order form on page 7
for full details.

Festival of the Cranes is Scheduled

Among the most awe-inspiring sights in nature is the annual fall migration of tens of thousands of sandhill cranes and snow geese to their wintering grounds on the Bosque del Apache National Wildlife Refuge near Socorro, New Mexico.

The eighth annual Festival of the Cranes is scheduled to begin Thursday, November 16., and will run three days. In total there are more than one hundred scheduled activities. Included are demonstrations, workshops, guided tours, exhibits and an Artisans Fair. Keynote speakers will be Karen Hollingsworth, Arthur Morris and Victor Emanuel.

Advanced registration is recommended. For Festival information and tickets write Festival of the Cranes, P.O. Box 743-NR, Socorro, NM 87801.



Audubon Adventures Report

One of the community projects sponsored by Flathead Audubon is the further education of youngsters in the whys and wherefors of nature. Audubon Adventures is in the form of an activity and information packet that is available for use in grades 3 through 6 and is provided each month during the school year.

The following schools have subscribed to the program: **Bigfork:** Bigfork Elementary and Swan River; **Kalispell:** Cayuse Prairie, Fairmont Egan, Hedges Elementary, Helena Flats, Peterson Elementary, Smith Valley and West Valley; **Marion:** Marion Elementary; **Olney:** Olney Elementary; **Polson:** Linderman; **Somers:** Somers Elementary; **West Glacier:** West Glacier Elementary; and **Whitefish:** Bissell and Muldown.

Teachers wanting more information on Audubon Adventures, should contact Kim Davis, (evenings) 755-1311.



The Editor's Spotting Scope

It's about time to get ready.

The geese are restless. Their instincts are prompting them to head south.

They're not alone. Many a power line in the valley plays host to chattering winged travelers, banding up and getting ready for their lengthy fall journey.

This is the time of the year that my neighbor, the Pileated Woodpecker, really makes his presence known. He lays claim to the berried bushes near the pond and with a raucous screech defends them from any and all who approach. That includes other birds, the dog, the neighbor's cats, as well as anyone pulling beets and carrots in the garden.

The bears are getting ready already. They're eating everything that's available in preparation for the time when nothing will be available.

Getting ready for winter is an age-old ritual that is demanding for all species. None are exempt. For us Montanans, we lay in the wood, lay out the long johns and lay off the swimsuit. Those who prefer not to face the Montana winter do their own preparing for the season by making plans to follow the birds south.

Of course, as we know, all birds do not go south. Many species remain and make the winter months much more pleasant for us just by being here. In turn, we attempt to keep the feeders full so that their lives are more comfortable during the frigid season.

When there is a compatible give-and-take among species, the ecosystem is the better for it. Too bad the Congress doesn't see it that way.

Sharon Bergman



AUDUBON'S AMERICA CONVENTION '96



Mark your calendar now and be a participant in the diverse 1996 Convention program that will feature political action, birds, and skills training!

National Convention '96 June 8-12

The American University
Washington, D.C.

Mobile Learning Labs June 12-14

Chesapeake Bay &
Important Bird Areas in PA

Registration materials available
January 1996

Audubon Convention Office
4150 Darley Ave., Suite 5
Boulder CO 80303
(303) 499-3622; Fax (303) 499-0286

Take Note —

✓ October General Meeting

Monday, October 9, 1995
Fish, Wildlife & Parks Bldg.
490 N. Meridian Rd, Kalispell
Mtg: 7:30 pm - Program: 8:15 pm

Program: The featured speaker will be Carol Daly, president of Sunrift Center for Sustainable Communities. The subject of her presentation will be "A Bumpy Trip Ahead," which will accent the long term trends in sustainability for the Flathead area, for the environment, economic viability, etc.

Daly has extensive background in government, manufacturing and economics, including 30 years in community development activities.



Flathead Audubon's
Annual
Sunflower Seed Sale
Order Form

BLACK, OIL SUNFLOWER SEEDS — High quality, 50 lb sack - \$17

Number of Sacks: _____ @ \$17 = Amount enclosed \$ _____

I will pick up my order on Saturday, October 14, in

Bigfork ☐ Columbia Falls ☐ Condon ☐ Kalispell ☐ Whitefish ☐
or on Sunday, October 15, in Polson ☐

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Address: _____

Are you a member ☐ or non-member ☐ ?



Send your order & check by October 7 to: Flathead Audubon

c/o June Ash

(Do NOT send order to Kalispell!)

P.O. Box 1129

Condon, MT 59826

Remember Your Feathered Friends!

When you stock up on your winter supply of sunflower seeds through Flathead Audubon, you achieve results in two ways: 1) the birds at your feeders are delighted and delight you in return; and 2) you assist Flathead Audubon in continuing the funding of several conservation and educational programs. The money raised through this annual sale of bird seed supports Audubon Adventures, an educational program for school children; enables the chapter to assist in the care and upkeep of local refuges, such as Ninepipe Reservoir; and provides scholarship funds for environmental education. It also helps other Audubon projects.

DELIVERY LOCATIONS: After completing the order, make note of the delivery location and mark your calendar accordingly, so you won't forget the time and place.

✓ **Bigfork:** Lakehills Shopping Center
Saturday, 10 - 12 noon; 837-5018

✓ **Columbia Falls:** First Federal Savings
Saturday, 10 - 12 noon; 892-1317

✓ **Condon:** Call June Ash, 754-2289
for arrangements

✓ **Kalispell:** Fish, Wildlife & Parks
Saturday, 12:30 - 2:30 pm; 756-8130

✓ **Whitefish:** Train Depot Parking Lot
Saturday, 12:30 - 2:30 pm; 862-2028

✓ **Polson Super 1 Foods** Parking Lot
Sunday, 12 noon - 2 pm; 849-5286



Back Door Attack on Arctic Refuge

The Senate Budget Committee has broken new ground by including revenue from oil production in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge in the pending federal budget. This back door tactic to open the refuge buries efforts to ruin this pristine area in a budget quagmire. The Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, which has been called America's Serengeti, is our country's largest wildlife preserve and is home to caribou, grizzly bears, wolves, foxes, musk ox and more than 130 species of shorebirds, loons, songbirds and geese. In May, senators in favor of drilling tied opening the refuge to the pending federal budget bill, making it more difficult to debate and vote on this crucial issue. President Clinton has pledged not to permit drilling, and needs to hear that he should veto a budget bill that allows development in the Arctic.

Opening the Arctic Refuge would mean offering 1.2 million acres of pristine coastal plain along the Beaufort Sea for energy exploration. Although this is only one-tenth of the refuge, the coastal plain is the most important calving ground for the Porcupine caribou herd and is considered the biological heart of the refuge. Oil exploration and drilling will also unalterably change the wilderness character of this arctic ecosystem.

Action: Write or call your senators and ask them to oppose the inclusion of oil production revenues from the Arctic Refuge in the pending federal budget. Such a sweeping policy decision should be thoroughly debated in full view of the American public, not buried in a budget bill. Let your senators know you support full protection for the coastal plain of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. Call the White House Hotline (202-456-1414) and ask the President to veto a budget bill that opens the Arctic Refuge or rolls back other environmental protections.



If you think the Endangered Species Act protects only spotted owls, think again.

Jackie Buckley's leukemia is in remission thanks to medicines derived from the flower of the rosy periwinkle.

Half of today's medicines come from natural sources. The Endangered Species Act is the best protection these sources have. But now the Act itself is in danger.

Tell Congress to save the law that saves lives. For more information about how you can help, call (202) 547-9009.



THE ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT PROTECTS



Bird Sightings Wanted

Get your binoculars warmed up and your field notebooks out. We need your bird sightings for the updated version of P. D. Skaar's *Montana Bird Distribution*.

The Montana Audubon Council, the Montana Natural Heritage Program, and the Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife & Parks are coordinating the revision of Skaar's *Montana Bird Distribution (MBD)*. The publication of the 5th edition is scheduled for spring, 1996.

This book summarizes information on where birds are found in Montana. It lists every species ever observed in the state and presents, for each bird, maps that show breeding and wintering areas. The book was first published by Dr. Skaar in 1975.

MBD is a summary of thousands of individual bird observations. Its value depends on the efforts of hundreds of birdwatchers - like you - in recording and reporting such observations. For the 5th edition, we need your sightings **no later than November 1, 1995**. We ask that you submit whatever you can as soon as you can, to avoid a deluge in November.

All of your bird records and observations since September, 1991 should be submitted. For common species, we ask that each individual submit only one record for a given species in a given area.

As in the 4th edition, breeding bird information will be presented on the basis of quarter-latilongs. Montana is divided into 47 areas, or latilongs. Latilongs and quarter-latilongs can be found in the current edition of *MBD*. If you aren't sure which quarter-latilong your observation is from, please use Township, Range and Section information. This information can be found on topographic maps at your local sporting goods store.

If you have any comments about the format of the current edition, please let us know now. We will be using basically the same format as the 4th edition, but will consider any of your ideas to make the book more friendly to users.

Send your data, comments, donations and questions by **November 1** to:

Montana Natural Heritage Program, MBD Project, 1515 East 6th Ave., Helena, MT 59620, 444-3009.

- Cedron Jones

Montana Bird Observation Report Form

Observer(s) (include name, address and telephone number of at least one observer): _____

Species: _____ **Subspecies/race:** _____

Location (Use at least one, and preferably all, of the following):

Latilong/Quarter Latilong: _____

Description of location (Highway number, miles from nearest town, etc.): _____

Township: _____ Range: _____ Section: _____

Date(s) (include the month (**required**), day (preferred), and year): _____

Status (B,b,t,W,w) (*see key below for descriptions*): _____

(Note: all B and W sightings must be backed up with observations)

Observations: _____

Key to Bird Observation Form

Species/Subspecies: Use either common or scientific names

Location:

- **Quarter Latilong:** Please give the latilong number plus a letter for the quarter (e.g., 4A, 37D) (from 4th editions of *MBD*). If you're unsure, please leave this field blank.

- **Description:** short but precise (e.g., Missouri River canyon 1 mile north of Cascade).

- **Township, Range, Section:** this is found on topographic maps.

Date: The month must be included in your sighting. For certain record types (e.g., "W", "b"), multiple dates during a season may be appropriate.

Status/Observations: If you are unsure of the type (B,b,t,v,W,w), please describe your observations. **For all B and W sightings, your observation must be backed up with details.**

- **B = Direct** evidence of breeding (nest or dependent young observed)

- **b = Indirect** evidence of breeding (courtship behavior, nest construction, etc.)

- **t = Transients** (observed, no evidence of breeding)

- **W = Overwintering** has occurred (**regular** sightings between December 15 and February 15)

- **w = Species** observed at least once between December 15 and February 15.



Flathead Audubon Society Directory

OFFICERS

| | | |
|----------------|--|----------|
| President | Leo Keane, 514 Pine Place, Whitefish, MT 59937 | 862-5807 |
| Vice President | Susannah Casey, P.O. Box 7922, Kalispell, MT 59904 | 857-3143 |
| Secretary | Kent Miller, 781 1st Ave. EN, Kalispell, MT 59901 | 257-4100 |
| Treasurer | Susan Hitchcox, 510 S. 5th W., Missoula, MT 59801 | 549-5692 |
| Past President | Brent Mitchell, 960 Kienas Rd, Kalispell, MT 59901 | 756-8130 |

DIRECTORS

| | | |
|---------|--|----------|
| 1993-96 | Elaine Corrigan, 7405 Valley View Rd, Polson, MT 59860 | 883-6895 |
| 1993-96 | Carol Purchase, 781 1st Ave. EN, Kalispell, MT 59901 | 257-4100 |
| 1994-97 | Sharon Bergman, 354 LaBella Ln, Big Arm, MT 59910 | 849-5286 |
| 1994-97 | Neal Brown, 560 Wolf Creek, Dr, Bigfork, MT 59911 | 837-5018 |
| 1994-97 | Dan Casey, P.O. Box 7922, Kalispell, MT 59904 | 857-3143 |
| 1994-97 | Ferne Cohen, P.O. Box 1782, Whitefish, MT 59937 | 862-2028 |

CHAIRS

| | | |
|--------------------|--|----------|
| Audubon Adventures | Kim Davis, 1230 Rhodes Draw, Kalispell, MT 59901 | 755-1311 |
| Conservation | Geoff Poole, 510 S. 5th W., Missoula, MT 59801 | 549-5692 |
| Field Trips | Dan Casey, P.O. Box 7922, Kalispell, MT 59904 | 857-3143 |
| Hostess | Carla Prach, 110 Goat Trail, Whitefish, MT 59937 | 862-1350 |
| Librarian | Gail Leonard, 514 Pine Place, Whitefish, MT 59937 | 862-5807 |
| Membership | June Ash, P.O. Box 1129, Condon, MT 59826 | 754-2289 |
| Newsletter | Sharon Bergman, 354 LaBella Lane, Big Arm, MT 59910 | 849-5286 |
| Program | Ed Prach, 110 Goat Trail, Whitefish, MT 59937 | 862-1350 |
| Publicity | Liz Hill, 888 McCaffery Rd, Bigfork, MT 59911 | 837-1444 |
| Refuge Projects | Lynn Kelly, 6525 Rocky Point Road, Polson, MT 59860 | 883-5797 |
| Schools, Clubs | Jean Robocker, 1655 Montford Road, Kalispell, MT 59901 | 756-6344 |
| Wetlands/Waterfowl | Neal Brown, 560 Wolf Creek Drive, Bigfork, MT 59911 | 837-5018 |

Montana Audubon Council

OFFICE

Janet Ellis, P.O. Box 595, Helena, MT 59624 443-3949

BIRDING HOTLINE: 756-5595

The Flathead Audubon Society is affiliated with the National Audubon Society and meets on the second Monday of each month from September through May. A business meeting is held at 7:30 p.m. followed by a special program at 8:15 p.m. 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.



P.O. Box 9173
Kalispell, MT 59904

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 | \$20 | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Individual Renewal | \$35 | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Family | \$38 | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Senior Individual | \$21 | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Senior Family | \$23 | <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

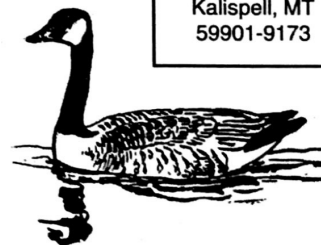
State Zip

N54 7XCHA

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;
P.O. Box 1129
Condon, Montana 59826
For address change, call 1-800-274-4201



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