



Pileated the Post

Newsletter of the Flathead Audubon Society

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Montana Shares Campaign



This fall, more than 50,000 Montanans will support Montana Shares and its 20 member organizations which are working in the public interest.

Montana Shares was formed this summer when Montana Community Shares merged with the Combined Health Appeal of Montana. This brings together Montana Audubon and other conservation groups with non-profit organizations working for medical research, sustainable agriculture, women's rights and small business development.

Montana Shares, along with United Way, makes it easy for people to support important community organizations through their workplace. Contributions are deducted directly from employees paychecks every month. The contributions go to support all of the member organizations or, if the donor so chooses, they go directly to specific groups (like Audubon!).

The 1996 campaign is now underway. You are asked to consider supporting Montana Audubon and Montana Shares

through your workplace. If your employer does not offer Montana Shares, call the Montana Audubon Council office in Helena at 443-3949 and they will help add your workplace to the ever growing list of supporters.

❁ Delivery Date Changed

Last month, the sunflower seed supplier reported that the crop wasn't dry enough to harvest, so for the first time in many years the October delivery date had to be postponed.

Please Note: For those taking delivery in Bigfork, Columbia Falls, Condon, Kalispell and Whitefish, the bird seed will be available on Saturday, **November 18**, at the previously appointed times. In Polson, delivery will be made on Sunday, **November 19**, 12 - 2.

New orders for bird seed will be accepted through November 10. Contact June Ash, 754-2289.



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The Editor's Spotting Scope

Looking out the window to the pine trees beyond the house, I notice several robins vying for the most advantageous perch. Occasionally one drops to the Mountain Ash tree, harvests some berries then flies on. Preparing for the flight south.

On my morning walks I notice the ever-changing autumn colors — not only in the deciduous trees, but in the clouds and the lake reflections. I hear the robin song as I walk and the sights and sounds of autumn make the exercise effort worthwhile.

As the trees shed their leaves there are new revelations: in the barren trees are bird nests which weren't noticeable during the previous months due to the thick foliage. It's apparent the robins were all around us with their families and now they're getting ready to leave.

I'm going to miss them. Robins are good neighbors and I've learned more about birds from my association with robins than from any other source. Watching a robin run his geiger-counter-for-worms across the lawn is always time well spent.

Several years ago a friend and I rented a cabin at Lake Mary Ronan for a few days. As we walked onto the porch, she commented, "Oh, look, there's a nest full of baby birds up over the cabin door." Although we were there to do some canoeing, we unhesitatingly added bird watching to our list of things to do.

Especially at feeding time. Both Mom and Dad Robin were kept busy carrying food to a loudly chirping, insistent brood. One morning I was sitting on the porch, watching the feeding ritual. Mom or Dad flew in, popped the worm down a gaping mouth, then went to the edge of the nest as the youngster raised his tail and the

parent flew off with something in its beak. Wait a minute! Did I see that right!

I called my friend to come and watch. We saw it happen again and again. The robin parents went through the same paces: drop the food in one end of the chick, go to the other end and get what I later learned to be the fecal sack and dispose of it.

Isn't that something! As a parent myself, I appreciated what the robins were doing in keeping the nest clean. Our species uses diapers; robins have fecal sacks.

There were many questions in my mind. How do they train the youngsters to up-end after being fed? Does a little one get a scolding if it doesn't wait for Mom or Dad to assist? Knowing what they have to go through as parents, does a robin couple ever decide to practice birth control and forego having a nest full of young ones?

Actually, raising a brood is a robin's purpose in life, for which we are lucky. I wish them well this winter and will welcome them back to the neighborhood as they bring in the spring season and start the cycle all over again.

Sharon Bergman



Take Note

✓ November General Meeting

Monday, November 13, 1995

Fish, Wildlife & Parks Bldg.

490 N. Meridian Rd, Kalispell

Mtg: 7:30 pm - Program: 8:15 pm

Program: The featured speaker will be Arlo Skari of Chester, Montana. The subject of his presentation will be "Sweetgrass Hills — Will We Make It Into the 21st Century?"

Skari, who has a degree in Pharmacy from the University of Montana, farms and ranches north of Chester. He is the coordinator for the Sweetgrass Hills Protection Association and a member of the Northern Plains Resource Council, based in Billings.



Audubon's Strategic Plan

Last June the National Audubon Society Board of Directors adopted a Strategic Plan for the organization. This Strategic Plan, which was developed in partnership with Chapter leaders, State Council members and staff, provides an exciting vision for Audubon's future. A vision where Audubon's focus is birds, wildlife and habitat. A vision that puts the emphasis on public policy advocacy and education through increased support and programs to our Chapters, State Councils and Field Offices. A vision which calls for a seamless Audubon where all parts are working together from member to chapter to national board. A vision that makes Audubon the most effective conservation organization in the country whether on a local, state, or national level. A vision that takes us back to our roots and makes us stronger.

In the plan, there are many exciting initiatives, from establishment of Audubon centers in communities to state field offices being created across the country; from increasing the reach and capacity of our technological communications to building a solid science program which will reinforce our education and grassroots advocacy campaigns. In these and other areas outlined in the plan, implementation actions must be put forward to turn the plan into a reality.

A Strategic Plan Coordination Office has been established to work with ten implementation committees to get this plan off the shelf and into budgets, staffing and programs. These changes will benefit our work on the ground for birds, wildlife and their habitat. As Audubon President John Flicker points out, "these implementation committees are where the rubber meets the road."

The following ten committees were selected based on major themes in the Plan:

1. Field Implementation Committee
2. Grassroots Implementation Committee
3. Campaigns/Issues Implementation Committee
4. Education Implementation Committee
5. Audubon Centers Implementation Committee
6. Science Implementation Committee
7. Communications Implementation Committee
8. Membership/New Revenue Implementation Committee
9. Human Resources Implementation Committee
10. Finance/Fundraising Implementation Committee

Each committee has National Audubon Society board, staff and chapter representatives. Their charge is simple - to propose specific actions to the full National Audubon Society board which will result in the successful implementation of the plan. Already, early actions have been given the green light. The first prototype field office is scheduled to be established in California this fall. New grassroots communication technologies involving computers and conference calling are being field tested in the States of Washington and New York. A new National Campaign selection process for Audubon is being developed for use prior to our 1996 convention.

Your continued involvement is key. You are invited to participate by sharing your ideas on the specific implementation issues anyone of the committees are facing. Background information on each implementation committee is available as well as progress reports on actions being recommended by contacting David Miller, Strategic Plan Coordination office, 1789 Western Ave. Albany, NY 12203; 518-869-9731/518-869-0737(fax); dmiller@audubon.org. (internet)

We hope you will join us in this exciting moment in Audubon's proud history. **Help us make the vision in Audubon's Strategic Plan indeed a reality.**

"— Nature gives to every time and season some beauties of its own; and from morning to night, as from cradle to grave, is but a succession of changes so gentle and easy that we can scarcely mark their progress. —" *Dickens*





The President's Page

*M*any hands make light work." A tip of the hat to whoever first said that. It is so true. One example. When a recent storm toppled a dozen of the last bug-killed lodgepole in our wood lot, I prepared myself for a tough job. Namely, finding an open weekend on my hunting and fishing calendar so I could take care of the mess.

Actually, my worst fear was that it might easily spill into two weekends — with one weekend to find and sharpen the chain saw. Yet another to get out there and limb all the trees, stack the brush, buck the logs into stove lengths, haul them to the woodshed, split and stack. Then inevitably it's back to the woods for the ever-popular job of cleaning up the brush piles.

Some people actually leave their brush piles to molder away in the woods, but in our neighborhood this practice is considered lazy and unsightly. In fact, many of our original achievements in brush piling became notable geographical landmarks — and that's when the neighbors started to talk.

Our "Mother of all Brush Piles" brush pile, the one that blocked our view of the Big Mountain, probably held more breeding pairs of Oregon juncos than all of Oregon. We could have taken out a conservation easement on the habitat value alone. An excellent rationale for letting it grow and prosper, I concluded. "Keep it Wild", that's my *modus operandi*. "It's the brush pile that ate Whitefish," other's cried out. Panic button. I was beginning to see the writing on the wall: one weekend of fishing and two of hunting lost to yard work.

But just in the nick of time "Many hands make light work" came to the rescue. This time in the form of Brent and Kay Mitchell who answered the call armed with chain saws, rakes, an all-terrain wheel barrow and a big, red gas-powered, brush-belching chipper/shredder comparable in size to the Trojan Horse.

We took to the woods like storm troopers. For Brent and Kay, who do "stewardship logging" on their own property, this job was a walk in the park. Seeming effortless, Brent floated among the thickets of down lodgepole, his chain saw flashing methodically, reducing the mess to stovewood and brush, while Kay kept the way clear with rake and wheelbarrow. By lunch time all the firewood was safely under cover. Nothing to it, we bragged, quaffing a few root beers and eye balling the brush piles. The "Mother Pile" eyeballed us back. Time to roll out the Trojan Horse,

we said.

Appropriately, she's a TROY-BILT. She's big, she's loud and she's hungry. With Brent feeding, me supplying arm-loads from the "Mother Lode" and Kay shoveling away the residuals we made amazingly short work of even this, the "Mount Rushmore of Brush Piles". By day's end our backyard, sans the "Mother", was like a fresh, new landscape with a view. Two weeks later, we hardly remember its looming presence. Such is the nature of change.

Of course, we still own a dozen "Baby Piles", little junco hatcheries scattered hither and yon through the woods. They too aspire to become legendary piles, fully deserving of Proper Names, but now we are committed. Next summer the TROT-BILT shall return. Meanwhile, let the neighbors talk. It's hunting season.

Leo Keane

It's Population, Stupid!

"On the local, state, national and global level, every problem of the environment such as pollution, loss of biodiversity, etc.; every problem of social justice such as racism, sexism, unequal distribution of wealth, etc.; every problem related to resource scarcity and conflict such as war, famine, etc.; every social problem such as crime, homelessness, school-room chaos, etc.; is made worse by increases in population. Conversely, all these problems would be easier to solve if populations were not growing or were smaller."

Carrying Capacity Network, a nonprofit, nonpartisan activist network concerned with sustainability issues, published the above as a challenge. Well, even if every problem they list is not directly linked to too many people, certainly most of them are.

It is a shame our elected decision makers refuse to face this issue. Certainly our efforts in Audubon would be easier if they did. Maybe we need to tell them. **Bob Ballou, Montana Audubon Quality of Life Committee**

Precycle Program Underway

On Fridays, from 3 - 6 pm, shoppers at Food Depot in Whitfish are encouraged to think before they buy and reduce waste. Recycling and other information is available for distribution. Volunteers are still needed, so contact Ferne Cohen, 862-2028 or 862-5711, if you can lend a hand for a few hours a week.



Birds Succumb to Salmonella — Clean Your Feeders

During this past summer there was an epidemic of Salmonella in the Flathead area which reduced the numbers of Pine Siskins and Evening Grosbeaks. Those who feed birds cannot ignore the disease issue. Following are easy steps that can be taken to prevent or minimize disease problems at feeders.

1. **Give them space** — Avoid crowding by providing ample feeder space. Lots of birds using a single feeder looks wonderful, but crowding is a key factor in spreading disease.
2. **Clean up wastes** — Keep the feeder area clean of waste food and droppings. A broom and shovel can accomplish a lot of good, but a shop vacuum will help even more.
3. **Make feeders safe** — Provide safe feeders without sharp points or edges. Even small cuts and scratches will allow bacteria and viruses to enter otherwise healthy birds.
4. **Keep feeders clean** — At least once a month, clean and disinfect feeders. Use one part of liquid chlorine household bleach to nine parts of tepid water to disinfect.
5. **Use good food** — Discard any food that smells musty, is wet, looks moldy or has fungus growing on it. Disinfect any storage container that held spoiled food as well as any scoop used.
6. **Prevent contamination** — Keep rodents out of stored food. Mice can carry and spread some bird diseases without being affected themselves.
7. **Act early** — Don't wait to act until you see sick or dead birds. With good prevention, you'll seldom find sick or dead birds at your feeder.
8. **Spread the word** — Encourage your neighbors who feed birds to follow the same precautions. Birds normally move among feeders and can spread diseases as they go.

Birds do get sick. Disease is one of many natural processes affecting wild species. Sick birds do show up at feeders and other birds can get sick as a consequence. Just because bird feeding is not problem-free, however, does not mean that it is bad or should be stopped. What is called for is intelligent bird feeding, and you can continue to enjoy feeding healthy, wild birds.

Montana Audubon Offers Grants for Wildlife

The Montana Audubon Council will be offering grants totaling \$1,000 to fund projects which benefit wildlife. Preference will be given to research and education projects which benefit nongame wildlife and their habitats. The funds can be used for mileage, supplies, equipment, printing and communications.

Applications must be postmarked on or before Friday, December 1, 1995. Grant recipients will be announced by March 1, 1996.

Requests for project guidelines should be made to the Audubon Wildlife Fund of Montana, P.O. Box 595, Helena, MT 59624, or call 443-3949.



Report from Connecticut

In September, I participated in an Audubon Strategy Retreat led by Pat Waak, Director of the NAS Human Population and Resource Use Department. The purpose was to integrate the population program into the overall strategic Audubon plan focused on birds, other wildlife and habitat. Participants included 30 Audubon chapter members, board members and staff, including John Flicker, new NAS president.

Efforts were focused on developing objectives and ways to implement them in attainable time frames. For example, our education activities must include population related articles in *Audubon Magazine*, *Audubon Adventures* and chapter newsletters. Projects such as Flathead Audubon's Precycle Program, which emphasizes reduction of waste, are important because of the significance of consumption in population problems.

The concentration of those attending the retreat was rewarded with the camaraderie of the group. Greenwich Audubon was involved in Hawk Watch at this time and 12,988 Broadwinged Hawks were observed along with many other species in migration.

Ferne Cohen





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
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
Refuge Projects	Lynn Kelly, 6525 Rocky Point Road, Polson, MT 59860	883-5797
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

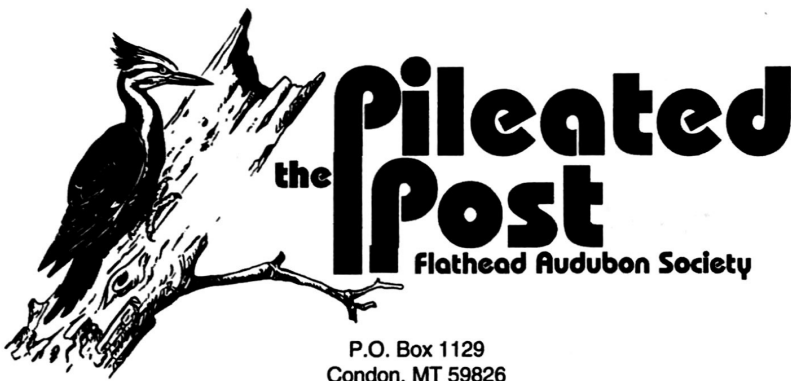
443-3949

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.



Address Correction Requested

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National Audubon Society
Chapter Membership Data Center
P.O. Box 51001
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