

the Flathead Post

Newsletter of the Flathead Audubon Society

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Report on 1997 Montana Legislature

The 1997 Montana Legislature was a tough, defensive session for Montana Audubon. Janet Ellis, Audubon Lobbyist, reported that the Montana Audubon Legislative Fund's efforts yielded the following results: helped to defeat 21 anti-environmental bills, while 11 passed; helped pass nine bills that strengthen environmental or wildlife laws, while 21 positive bills died.

The most significant victories involved the defeat of bad legislation, including all the bills to weaken the subdivision and conservation easement laws, several bills aimed at taking, selling or developing public lands; and a very radical private property rights bill that would have put an end to enforcement of the state's environmental laws.

Ellis reported the biggest disappointments came with the passage of bad legislation. The Legislature voted to allow polluting industries to escape environmental penalties if they audit themselves; weaken the Major Facility Siting Act; dismantle significant campaign finance laws related to ballot initiatives; create a program to restore water quality that will make it difficult - and perhaps impossible - to produce cleaner water; and authorize the commercial sale of Yellowstone's bison.

The only good news related to the legislation is that many of the bad bills were amended, reducing the damage they will do.

A monumental effort resulted in the securing of \$150,000 for the Fort Belknap Reservation to reintroduce black-footed ferrets, an effort spearheaded by Audubon. Additional positive bills that passed included setting aside

state owned islands as primitive areas; revising the liability provisions of Montana's superfund law; and increasing the penalties for illegal fish introduction.

Most of the pro-environment, pro-wildlife measures considered failed to pass. All legislation designed to improve water quality was defeated, as were bills designed to regulate recreational conflicts on our lakes and streams.

If you are interested in more details about the 1997 legislative session, contact Montana Audubon at P.O. Box 595, Helena, MT 59624 or phone (406) 443-3949.



Fall Field Trip Scheduled

An early fall field trip to the Upper Swan Valley has been scheduled for Sunday, September 21. Participants will visit the newly-established Swan Ecosystem Center at the Condon Work Center, the SEC/Forest Service Ponderosa Pine demonstration site and, as time permits, other types of logging in the valley.

Bird and other wildlife habitat issues will be examined at the management sites, and there will be an opportunity for early fall birding in the Swan.

The field trip will start at the USFS Condon Work Center on Hwy 83 S near mile post 43 (across from the airstrip) at 11 a.m. Participants should bring lunch, walking shoes and rain gear. Contact Rod Ash, 754-2289, for further information.

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The editor's spotting scope

As youngsters growing up in the Arizona desert, my sister and I quickly learned to cope with and respect scorpions, lizards and rattlesnakes. As a matter of course, we shook out our shoes before putting them on, to remove desert sand and/or scorpions. Someone told us if you catch a lizard by the tail, the tail would fall off. So we made it a point not to touch lizards, even when we knew the tail wouldn't fall off if we did.

When playing Hide & Seek, we were ever on the alert for snakes. If we spotted one in the yard, one of us would run to the house, yelling to Mother, "There's a snake in the yard!" and she took care of it.

When I married a California rancher, my experience with snakes carried forward. I never learned to like them, but at least checked the tail for rattlers before yelling to my husband, "There's a snake in the yard!" and he took care of it.

On one occasion, my young daughter ran in the house, screaming that there was a snake in the yard — and I had to take care of it myself. My baby son was also in the yard and my husband wasn't home. I snatched up my son, who was right outside the front door, and brought him in, then grabbed a .306 rifle from the gun closet. In true western fashion, this angry, scared mother blazed away with the gun, pruning a bush, shredding the lawn under it, and also taking care of the rattlesnake under the bush.

As time passed, my attitude toward snakes modified somewhat, but perhaps mindful of Eve in the Garden, I cannot bring myself to view snakes in a zoo exhibit or television nature presentation. Why spend time looking at something you don't really like?

Several years ago I bought a home in

Big Arm and planted a garden. And I inherited some snake friends (that term is used loosely). Since these were garden snakes, we quickly reached an agreement that we would all go our own way and leave the other alone. They stay in dark places, like the woodpile, under the deck and in the bean patch. For my part, I make a lot of noise when I approach those places, but still jump and cuss when I see one.

When someone comes in and says, "There's a snake in the yard," I simply reply, "That's okay. He lives here and earns his keep by eating creepy crawlies in the garden."

After all these years, we finally got it worked out.
Sharon Bergman

Hotline highlites ☎ ☎ ☎

Yes, fall's approaching and the annual shore bird migration has started. Places to watch for shore birds include the Willow Glen ponds and the ponds at Whitefish Stage Rd and Charmstead Rd. There's a chance to site Sandpipers, Stilts, Plovers, Greater and Lesser Yellowlegs and Phalaropes. For more complete information, call the Flathead Audubon Hotline at 756-5595.

TAKE NOTE—

September General Meeting

Monday, September 8, 1997
Fish, Wildlife & Parks Bldg.
490 N. Meridian Rd, Kalispell
Meeting starts at 7:30 p.m.

Program: Mary Sloan, president of the Montana Native Plant Society and an award winning conservationist, will present a program on "The Three Forks of the Flathead: Exploring the Ecosystem." The presentation will be illustrated with slides and a Question & Answer period will follow. A retired Home Economics teacher, making her home in Whitefish, Sloan commented, "I guess you could call me an amateur naturalist now."



President's Page >>

Here we go again — the end of summer and the beginning of Audubon. I know it's the beginning of Audubon because of the phone calls, the scheduling, the newsletter deadline — all that behind-the-scenes work which means we're in business. After a well-deserved break from Audubon concerns, the officers and directors of our organization must again commit to the extra time it takes to accomplish the environmental, educational and advocacy work the group is founded on.

It's a significant commitment. I know darn well that each person who sits at the table of our board meetings September through May has a vision well beyond themselves; beyond personal attainment, desire and materialism; a vision that includes the requirements of the earth and other life. What rare attributes in these days of expensive cars and health spas.

For my part, in this closing year of my term as "Chairman of the Board", I commit to keeping our work at Flathead Audubon relevant, worthwhile, enjoyable — and not overwhelming. Let's be thorough, but focused. Save the earth, as we must, without killing ourselves. Life is short enough.

Speaking of the Board of Directors, we have three new directors to welcome:

Sharon DeLong of Eureka, who has been instrumental in forming our "sister chapter", Eureka Audubon, up in her neck of the woods; Bill Breen of Kalispell, who attends just about all of our monthly meetings, and who answered the call to lend us the benefit of his good judgement and open mind; and Bruce Tannehill of Whitefish, who actually goes birding, of all things, and who may be one of us with some real spare time now that he's retired from teaching. We look forward to their input, new energy and fresh perspective.

On the other hand, it is difficult for me to imagine Flathead Audubon without the three familiar faces the new directors will replace.

Ferne Cohen (with her ever-present sidekick, Marty) is the patron saint of environmental activists and irreplaceable; Sharon Bergman, who has in her possession a copy of the chapter bylaws, and has read them! and who has crafted *The Pileated Post* newsletter through the past seven years into a regional favorite; and Dan Casey, our touchstone to State Government, our claim to fame as the record holder of the Montana Big Day Count, our walking encyclopedia and often our conscience. What a wealth of enlightenment you three have offered during your terms. You'll be very missed as directors, but always appreciated however you choose to participate in Flathead Audubon.

The end of summer, the beginning of Audubon. . . . I know it's the end of summer because this morning when I stepped out before dawn, sipping my coffee, I listened to the soft peeps of migrating songbirds passing overhead. I've come to expect this seasonal passage, this harbinger of autumn. It is our good fortune to live in their flyway, here where the Rocky Mountain Trench squeezes down to the narrow funnel of Whitefish Lake.

As daylight spills into the valley these nocturnal migrants fall-out, return to earth to the safety of trees and enliven our woods while they regroup, refuel and chatter among themselves.

On mornings like these, I wish September lasted all year.

Leo Keane



Clean Water Act Anniversary Coming Up

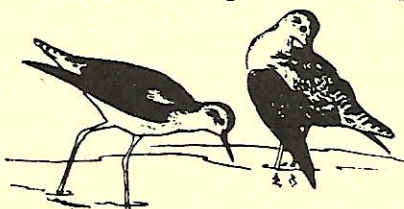
On October 18, the Clean Water Act turns 25 years old — a silver anniversary!

Thanks to this important law, the rate of wetland loss in this country has slowed dramatically, providing greater protection against flood losses, improving water quality and helping to protect over one-third of all North American bird species (excluding Mexico) that depend on wetland for their survival.

Unfortunately, special interests want Congress to weaken this important law during the upcoming reauthorization process, threatening our birds, other wildlife and their habitats. Audubon members need to send a strong message to their members in Congress that wetlands are important, and that the Clean Water Act wetlands provisions need to be improved - not weakened.

The Senate and the House take fall recesses in October. What better way to influence public policy than to take elected officials on a tour of a wetland in their district. Or take a birding trip and invite an elected official along. The opportunity can be used to educate the legislator about the importance of wetlands habitat for birds and wildlife.

The Senate will be in recess October 10 - 19. The House recesses October 2 - 5 and 10 - 13. A 25th Anniversary packet can be obtained from Mac Blewer, National Audubon, 1901 Pennsylvania Ave., NW, Washington, DC 20006. Fax: (202) 861-4290; e-mail: mblewer@audubon.org.



Flathead Audubon

Mission Statement

The Flathead Audubon Society is a local chapter of the National Audubon Society.

- Our mission is to conserve birds, wildlife habitat and ecosystem diversity.
- Awareness and appreciation of the natural world is promoted through educational activities and advocacy programs.
- We work with diverse groups and agencies to achieve sound decisions on natural resource issues.
- Our community outreach includes school programs, work projects and field trips.
- While focusing our efforts in northwest Montana, we believe in the protection of the earth and all its inhabitants.

New population and habitat campaign

For the past year the National Audubon Population and Habitat Campaign has provided funding for a statewide committee in Montana. The purpose is to mount a broad-based effort to strengthen U.S. leadership on population stabilization through the expansion of a network of citizens who understand the links between human population levels and the quality of the environment. One of the goals of this network is to affect local, state and national public policy on population issues.

At the state and local levels, the campaign is interested in integrating population considerations into individual state plans for the conservation of habitat. The Montana committee seeks to educate and inform people across the state. It's important for Audubon members and nonmembers alike to recognize the negative impacts of widespread population growth on land and wildlife and that some of these impacts can be turned around.

Future reports on committee progress will be made by various committee members.

Valerie Harms



This 'n That in the Flathead

Scholarships awarded

Four scholarships in the amount of \$125 were issued this summer, to enable students to attend the Glacier Institute Field Camp at Big Creek. Those attending were Hannah Casey, Somers; Christian Mascho, Whitefish; and Ally Miller and Christina Collins, both of Kalispell.

The Board of Directors authorized the scholarships, which are used for educational and scientific purposes pertaining to ornithology, environmental and similar areas of study.



Bird seed sale coming up

Orders will be taken in early October for Flathead Audubon's annual bird seed sale, with delivery planned for the weekend of November 15/16.

This is the chapter's major fund raiser, and the order forms will be mailed to previous customers and will also be included in the October issue of the newsletter.

For those in need of sunflower seed before November, there is a limited amount available at several locations. Customers should contact Rod Ash, 754-2289, Condon; Lynn Kelly, 883-5797, Polson; Brent Mitchell, 756-8130, Kalispell; or Feme Cohen, 862-2028, Whitefish.



Audubon Adventures go to school

One of the major projects of Flathead Audubon is to provide the Audubon Adventures educational packet to area schools that want to carry the nature program in their curriculum.

Among those participating are: Bigfork Elementary, Bissell School, Cayuse Prairie School, Chrysalis School, Cornelius Hedges, Fairmont Egan, Hot Springs Elementary, Polson's Linderman School, Marion School, Muldown

Elementary, Peterson Elementary, Smith Valley School, Somers School, Swan River School and West Valley School.

Anyone wanting to donate the minimal cost (around \$30) of the Audubon Adventures packet to an area school that does not currently subscribe should contact Kim Davis, 1230 Rhodes Draw, Kalispell, MT 59901, 755-1311, for full information.



Welcome to those new among us



Bigfork: Babah Hanson; **Columbia Falls:** Ann Decker, Margaret Kuhn and J. Marantette; **Eureka:** Katy Foley and Mark Kimerer; **Fortune:** Betty Pomeroy; **Hot Springs:** Mark Boesch, Garnet Loberg and C.A. Lininger; **Hungry Horse:** Lee Byington; **Kalispell:** Laura Arvidson, Marilyn Bacon, Mitchell Bales, Betty Carr, Maxine Compton, Sue Delange, J. Dusing, Mike Eacher, Kim Emery, Alice Fromm, Van Henderson, Lillian Hinkley, Mel Maguire, North Expeditions, Hope Noyes, Kate Parkin, Margaret Piersal and Daniel Remington;

Lakeside: Donna Briggs; **Libby:** Lee Brundin, Glen Johnson and Frances Sherey; **Moise:** Richard Bentley; **Pablo:** Joe Frost; **Polson:** Louis Elmore, Harry Evarts, Dawn Green, Diane Johnson, Robert Mitchell, Dorothy Preston, Gary Wicks and R.F. Wollin; **Ronan:** Tom Collier and Terry Dumont; **Somers:** Wayne Finney; **Thompson Falls:** Harold Craig; **Whitefish:** Donna Allen, Mitchell Bales, Beverly Klapperich and Jennifer Speer.



Bird America bucks add up

FAS Treasurer Susan Hitchcox reports that the money raised through the 1997 Bird America drive totalled over \$1,100. About \$275 of that was raised at the May meeting raffle. Susan's comment was: "Yahoo!"



Flathead Audubon Society Directory

OFFICERS

President	Leo Keane, 514 Pine Place, Whitefish, MT 59937	862-5807
Vice President	Geoff Poole, 4755 Foothill Road, Bigfork, MT 59911	837-4645
Secretary	Gail Sullivan, 932 Columbia Avenue, Whitefish, MT 59937	862-5775
Treasurer	Susan Hitchcox, 4755 Foothill Road., Bigfork, 59911	837-4645
Past President	Brent Mitchell, 960 Kienas Rd, Kalispell, MT 59901	756-8130

DIRECTORS

1997-2000	William Breen, 335 Mountain Meadow Rd., Kalispell, MT 59901	755-2142
1997-98	Neal Brown, 560 Wolf Creek Dr, Bigfork, MT 59911	837-5018
1997-2000	Sharon DeLong, 2495 Grave Creek Rd., Eureka, MT 59917	
1996-99	Sorja Hartman, P.O. Box 1388, Columbia Falls, MT 59912	758-8516
1996-99	Jim Rogers, Polson, MT 59860	883-3611
1997-2000	Bruce Tannehill, 239 Deer Trail, Whitefish, MT 59937	862-4548

CHAIRS

Audubon Adventures	Kim Davis, 1230 Rhodes Draw, Kalispell, MT 59901	755-1311
Conservation	Geoff Poole, 4755 Foothill Road, Bigfork, MT 59911	837-4645
Field Trips	Betty Winzenburg, 1436 Rogers Lane, Kila, MT 59920	755-1697
Hospitality	Betty Winzenburg (see above)	
	Debby Rossi, 480 5th Ave. EN, Columbia Falls, MT 59912	892-1317
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	Jim Rogers, Polson, MT 59860	883-3611
Publicity	Linda Winnie, P.O. Box 220, Kila, MT 59920	755-1406
Quality of Life	Ferne Cohen, P.O. Box 1782, Whitefish, MT 59937	862-2028
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

OFFICE PRESIDENT

Janet Ellis, P.O. Box 595, Helena, MT 59624	443-3949
Rod Ash, P.O. Box 1129, Condon, MT 59826	754-2289

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. 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 Fax: 849-5486.

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 _____

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State _____ Zip _____

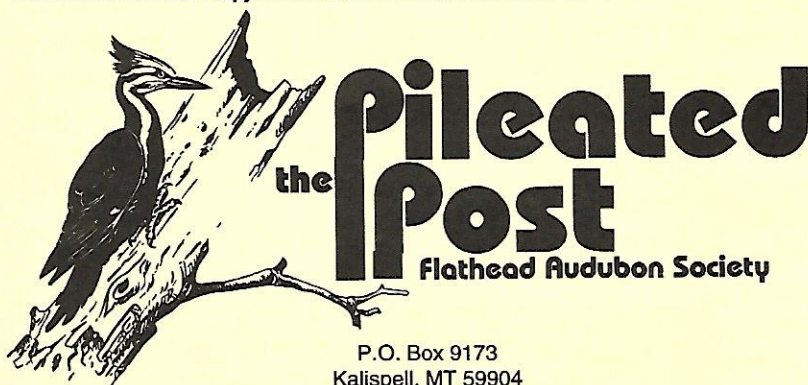
N54 7XCHA

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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