



the

Pileated Post

Newsletter of the Flathead Audubon Society

VOLUME 24

NUMBER 7

OCTOBER, 1999

MONTANA WETLANDS AND STREAMS AT RISK

Over the past year, the Army Corps of Engineers has requested each of its District offices to develop regional conditions for proposed new Nationwide Permits (NWP) that would provide extra protection for regionally significant and/or especially vulnerable waters in their area. The permits are to meet the legal requirement of allowing for no more than minimal impact on the environment. (Nationwide permits are designed to avoid unnecessary public and government agency review of activities that take place in, but have very small impacts on wetlands. Examples of acceptable nationwide permit activities include building a boat ramp, installing navigational buoys, or the placement of a telephone pole.)

Some districts have done a good job revoking NWPs that would result in too much impact to wetland resources in their region. They have also listed various types of waters and geographic areas that should receive increased protection. The Omaha District, however, has issued a last-minute proposal to replace all nationwide permits in their geographical area of jurisdiction (which contains Montana) with a proposal that is much less protective of wetlands and streams. Omaha District's proposal combines a "regional general permit" (RGP) for impacts under 1/3 acre or 500 linear feet,

with a "letter of permission" (LOP) process for impacts from 1/3 to 3 acres. Although the "regional general permit," by itself could be an acceptable substitute for the NWPs, the "letter of permission" is substantially weaker than the current NWPs. It would allow the destruction, with minimal review, of three acres of wetlands, streams, rivers or lakes for almost any type of activity. Only fens and "point source springs" would be protected from this nearly-automatic permitting.

Unlike the current draft of the Nationwide Permits, the Omaha proposal would place no restrictions on impacts to 100 year floodplains, impaired waters, or critical resource waters. Residential, commercial and institutional development activities would not be subject to any limits based on the total size of the development activity - each project could destroy the full three acres. Other types of activities (bank stabilization, utilities, road crossings, stormwater facilities, agricultural drainage, surface coal mining, sand and gravel mining, etc.) would also be allowed to fill three acres, an impact much greater than allowed by NWP proposal limits. There would be no special restrictions on the destruction of prairie potholes to increase agricultural

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Chickadee Chatter

It was a peaceful evening, the very first day of fall. It had been a long day and I needed a few peaceful moments. The day was waning and the clouds in the sky made the evening come that much more quickly. A robin was up in a birch tree; he was silhouetted against the gray sky and singing a robin song. It sounded wonderful I hadn't heard a robin in several weeks, the many we had here over the summer had been gone for many weeks.

As I stood there listening and watching a kingfisher started chattering, he was perched in a tall cottonwood tree that leans out over the river. He was searching the shallows for that last minnow before dark. He suddenly flew and a blue-gray streak darted in front of me. The osprey called a few times, it was the last time I would hear this fellow this year. He started the southern journey the next day, already I miss him.

The wind had been blowing much of the day and the water in the river was rolling with big swells. They come up from Flathead Lake where they have had the length of the lake to build up and not content to stop at the north shore they continue up the river. The waves break up against the shores of the river; it's a nice sound. Not peaceful and lulling like the sounds a stream makes but enjoyable. It is loud enough that it drowns out all of the sounds of man. If you close your eyes it is easy to imagine you are in a more primitive place and in an earlier time.

A flock of crossbills flew over; they flew across the river making good headway against the wind and disappeared. I walked a little ways enjoying the wind in my face and there on the ground in front of me was what was left of a giant beehive. The wind had knocked it down from an ancient fir tree. There was beehive paper scattered all over the ground, it is really remarkable stuff. Have you ever noticed all the colors that are present in a beehive? It is mostly mottled shades of gray but there are yellows, tans, and greens present as well, quite amazing. Nature's camouflage.

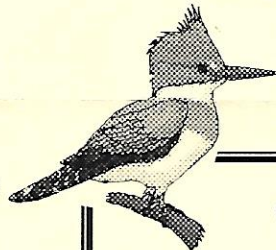
The wind was blowing the leaves off of the trees as I walked along. Small bits of color fell all over, swirling in the breeze, falling in my face and at my feet. The bushes

and small leafy trees in the woods were golden and red and orange and green. They glowed in the final light of the day. Swaying and bobbing in the fickle air currents the leaves on the branches were like tiny dancers.

On my way back I found a beautiful feather laying on the ground, it had not been disturbed by the wind. It was a primary feather from one of the wild turkeys that wander around these few acres. It was very beautiful, a rich brown with black spots and iridescent on the tip.

This first day of fall was all but spent but it had been a day of gifts. I have taken very little time these past four months for contemplation and peace. My short walk in the wind had reminded me of the importance of peace in ones life. The robin and the kingfisher and the bees and the trees had all given me gifts that cannot be replaced by anything else on earth. We must learn to accept such gifts with grace and let the peace of such things fill our souls.

Leslie Kehoe



OCTOBER MEETING

October 11, 1999

Fish, Wildlife & Parks Bldg.

490 Meridian Rd., Kalispell

Business Meeting starts at 5:15PM

General Meeting starts at 7:30PM

PROGRAM: Humanity's Explosive Growth and its Effect on Natural Habitat, a slide program by Amy Zarrett. Amy is the Organizer for the Population and Habitat Campaign within Montana Audubon. One of ten national campaigns within Audubon, the Population and Habitat Campaign aims to address the myriad threats to birds and wildlife. The Montana Audubon Population and Habitat slideshow will address issues specific to Montana concerning our human effects on the natural world and creative ways we can think about the problems and solutions. If time permits she will also show a 20-minute video called Six Billion and Beyond which highlights fresh perspectives on population growth and reveals innovative efforts worldwide that focus on individuals and families and their community grassroots efforts.



MONTANA WETLANDS AND STREAMS AT RISK

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

production - farmers could destroy up to three acres instead of two.

The "letter of permission" process requires applicants to wait for a letter of permission prior to proceeding with a project. However, like an NWP, coordinating agencies have only 15 days to review proposed projects, only on-site avoidance and minimization is required, and the public has no opportunity to comment. Further, the district "reserves the authority to require mitigation plans if the function of the aquatic resource impacted indicates replacement is appropriate." This is a very weak statement that could signify a lack of commitment to requiring mitigation for most projects.

The Omaha District has given interested parties only 30 days to comment on their proposal. Comments must be received by October 7 on the proposed regional general permit, the proposed "letter of permission," and on the process in general.

WHAT YOU CAN DO:

1. Call the District today and tell them that this proposal to further weaken protection for Great Plains (and Montana's) Wetlands is unacceptable. They must impose conditions that would provide greater (not weaker!) protection for the Great Plains critically valuable wetlands and streams, or adopt only the "regional general permit." Call Cheryl Goldsberry at the Omaha District Regulatory Branch (402) 221-4142.
2. Submit written comments to the ArmyCorps of Engineers in Omaha. Send a copy to the regional office of the EPA and the MT Dept. of Environmental Quality.
3. Call the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the MT Dept. of Environmental Quality, and your local government authorities

and ask them to oppose this bad proposal.



EPA
Region Office
999-18th Street
Denver Place, Suite 500
Denver, CO 80202-2405

Montana Dept. of Environmental Quality
1520 E. Sixth Avenue
P.O. Box 200901
Helena, MT 59620-0901

From the September 15, 1999 Armchair Activist from Montana Audubon is produced in cooperation with National Audubon. A sample letter is available and a timely response imperative. Please call Montana Audubon at (406) 443-3949.

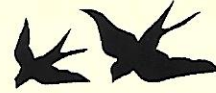
NEW MISSION MOUNTAIN AUDUBON CHAPTER

The first meeting of the new Mission Mountain Audubon chapter was a resounding success. Eighty-eight people were on hand for Denver Holt's exciting presentation on Montana's owls. Come join us on Tuesday, October 12th, 7:30 PM., at the Polson City Library's meeting room for Dr. E.B. Eiselein's talk on "American Indian History: Ignored But Not Forgotten." This presentation will confront some of the popular misconceptions about Indians in American history.

For those Flathead Chapter members that live on the Flathead Indian Reservation and would like to join Mission Mountain Audubon (it's ok - the Flathead Board of Director's unanimously approved the formation of the new chapter), simply inform National Audubon to make the switch next time you renew your subscription. Please include Mission Mountain's new chapter code, N 60, in your request. For more information please contact Jim Rogers at 883-3611.



FROM THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS



As a biology teacher at Flathead High School for the past 20 years I have been sending students to Audubon meetings to encourage their love of nature and to acquaint them with the amazing research that is going on in our own back yard. As a teacher, it seemed to cost me nothing: no requests of speakers to write, no reports from students to grade, no field study plans to justify. But the rewards have been abundant: joyful accounts of new discoveries, burgeoning romances between the attendees (I always billed Audubon meetings as cheap—I mean inexpensive—dates), a realization from the young that learning continues forever (many high school students have chuckled about the distinct age difference between themselves and the average Audubon attendee). In this case, the costs were clearly outweighed by the benefits.

But I was recently pleasantly reminded of the old ecological adage: "there is no free lunch" when I attended my first Flathead Audubon board meeting as a newly elected member. Neal Brown has "generously" relinquished the writing of the president's column to board members and the newest member on the board was the first to be asked. Thanks, Neal. I look on writing this not only as a dubious honor but also as a means of paying back a bit on my account for all the nourishment Audubon has been providing for our young minds.

I have seen the influence of Audubon not only in the attendees at meetings but especially in those who have been fortunate enough to attend camps or go on field studies. One of my most enthusiastic standard biology students this year is a brilliant football player whose grandmother brought him to Dan Casey's beginning birding class when he was in grade school. Zach Lindsey's love of nature had been nurtured early and he continues to lead our class with insights and questions. These are attitudes I am confident he will carry in adulthood.

As a teacher and parent (the ultimate one on one teaching opportunity) I have been awed by the innate wonder that children exhibit. As E.O. Wilson points out, we are all biophiles from birth but if we are not given opportunities to watch the bird take wing not the dragonfly unfurl that biophile might wither; with it will be gone our understanding of our intimate connections with our natural world. The students of today do not have as many opportunities to see those connections. There are fewer farms, fewer tent-campers, fewer backyard gardens, fewer family fishing expeditions. This gives us a greater responsibility to make certain our students, our children, our grandkids and all of our young neighbors in a world without borders do not lose that sense of wonder. Many organizations, including our local chapter have taken on that challenge. Fish, Wildlife & Parks and teacher volunteers have hooked many on fishing; Glacier National Park and Native Plant Society members have encouraged kids to get their hands dirty; subscription farms have opened their gates to school-kids.

Those are only a few examples. There are also many avenues that Audubon, locally, nationally and globally offer that serve to promote the biophile in children of all ages. I anticipate learning more about them and helping other school teachers of the Flathead Valley be providing free food for thought and action for their students. One of the spin-offs might be a future board member...someone else to help you with this column Neal!

Gratefully submitted, Linda de Kort

DID YOU KNOW:

- Wetlands occupy less than 1% of Montana.
- Montana has already lost approximately 27% of its wetlands.
- More than 50% of our state's bird species depend upon or frequent wetlands.



SCHOLARSHIP THANKS

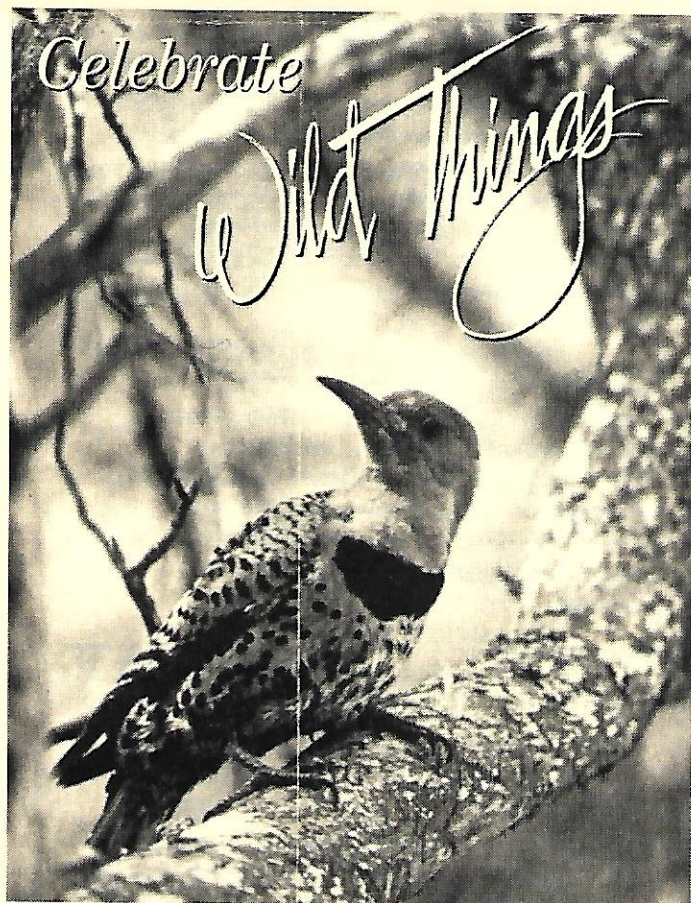
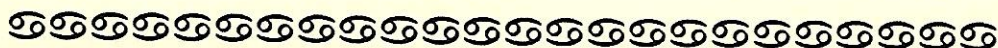
Flathead Audubon recently received a thank you note from one of our scholarship recipients. Geno Randono has been with the Big Brothers\Big Sisters program for over six years since he was ten years old and his father passed away. He was highly recommended by his case manager for Glacier Institute's high school camp entitled "Ecology Afield" held in August. On his application, he wrote, "I am interested in ecology because I believe that environmental awareness begins with the individual. I enjoy spending my free time in the woods. I would like to know more about the happenings of the forest. Also, a job in the outdoors, possibly earth sciences, would be very enjoyable and this class gives me a chance to explore job possibilities." At the end of August, Geno sent this typed note:

Dear Audubon Society,

My name is Geno Randono and I received a scholarship from the Audubon Society to attend The Glacier Institute's, Ecology Afield. I am writing to thank you for the opportunity to attend the Institute's class. I enjoyed it greatly, there was never a dull moment. We had world experts talk to us about Grizzly Bears to new theories on global warming. We heard both sides of all the issues and decided for ourselves. This program was a catalyst for opening my eyes to the environment and its issues. I thank you again and keep awarding scholarships, so others can have the great opportunity that I did.

Sincerely,
Geno Randono

Flathead Audubon awarded three such scholarships to young people to attend Glacier Institute Field Camps.



There are more than 500 national wildlife refuges across the United States, so chances are there's one near you.

Although teeming with all kinds of wildlife, America's National Wildlife Refuge System is great habitat for people, too.

If you visit a wildlife refuge during National Wildlife Refuge Week, you can enjoy special events like birding tours, fishing and hunting events, nature hikes, and educational activities for children.

National wildlife refuges offer outstanding opportunities to enjoy wildlife and the wonders of the outdoors all year long.

For more information on your National Wildlife Refuge System, call 1-800-344-WILD. For information on Refuge Week events, visit refuges.fws.gov and click on "special events."

*National Wildlife
Refuge Week*

October 10-16, 1999





Report from the Board of Directors

Negotiations with the State Lands Board are still underway to determine Flathead Audubon's bill for the lease of the Owen-Sowerine Natural Area. The State Lands Board has promised to set a lease fee that Flathead Audubon can afford, but similar leases with other groups must be negotiated at the same time -- so it may be a long process! The Flathead Audubon Directors thank Janet Ellis of Montana Audubon for playing a key role in these negotiations.

Flathead Audubon has purchased insurance to provide limited liability coverage for field trip activities.

New Board members Linda deKort and Leslie Kehoe are welcomed, as well as new Membership Coordinators Jill and Michael Fanning.

Leo Keane, our new Program Chair, invites ideas for programs for the coming two years. He would like to feature programs on birds and wildlife.

A new Audubon chapter is being formed covering the region of the Salish-Kootenai Reservation. It is tentatively named the Mission Mountain Chapter. Jim Rogers is leading the organization of the new chapter. Meetings will be the 2nd Tuesday of each month, September through May, at the Polson library. Flathead Audubon expects to lose from 75 to 100 members to this new chapter, but anticipates that the emergence of an independent chapter that meets in Polson will draw many new members to the Audubon cause. Flathead Audubon welcomes the opportunity for shared action and cooperative projects that will be made possible by the organization of this new chapter.

The Board will begin to explore new fund raising strategies. Neither the sunflower seed sales nor the Birdathon are bringing in as much as in previous years, and the formation of the new chapter in Polson will decrease income from subscribed memberships. Increased donations from members could help to support some of our ongoing educational and scholarship programs, but it is likely that soon we will have to either find ways of expanding revenue or cut funding for worthy projects.

Flathead Audubon is cooperating with Flathead Land Trust and other local

conservation groups to host an educational program on the Flathead River watershed. This is the second year this program has been organized. Last year classes from local schools came for one day of hands-on educational activities. This has been expanded to two days this year. Leo Keane and Bruce Tannehill, with help of other volunteers, will lead the classroom activities for Flathead Audubon. This year the program also includes a bus tour for community leaders of important Flathead River sites. Dan Casey is one of the lecturers on the tour, and our Owen-Sowerine area is one of the stops. Pattie Brown will represent Flathead Audubon on the bus tour.

The annual Sunflower Seed Sale will again be handled by Rod and June Ash. The Board decided to leave the price of our 50-pound sacks at \$17. Though several local stores sell 50 pound sacks of seed for less, people who buy from Flathead Audubon recognize that part of their payment is a donation to the Chapter's education, research and conservation activities. By Linda Winnie

FLATHEAD AUDUBON HAS NEW OFFICERS

New officers for Flathead Audubon were elected by the general membership meeting in May. They are: Neal Brown, President; Linda Winnie, Vice-President; Gail Sullivan, Secretary; Bruce Tannehill, Treasurer. All were elected for a two year term. Jim Rogers steps into the position of Past-President.

Linda deKort and Leslie Kehoe were elected to be new members of the Board of Directors. John Ashley, Ferne Cohen, Sonja Hartman, Leo Keane, Robin Magaddino, and Brent Mitchell have been appointed to one-year terms as Directors. Continuing as members of the Board are William Breen and Sharon DeLong.

FLATHEAD AUDUBON WOULD LIKE TO SEND ITS CONDOLENCES TO ONE OF OUR BOARD MEMBERS, BILL BREEN, ON THE LOSS OF HIS WIFE, MARGARET. SHE HAD BEEN A MEMBER OF FLATHEAD AUDUBON AND AN ACTIVE ENVIRONMENTALIST AND SHE WILL BE MISSED.



Flathead Audubon's Annual Sunflower Seed Sale

50 lb. sack of Black, Oil Sunflower Seeds - \$17
Highest Quality - Grown in Montana

Feed your feathered friends and support Audubon Projects too!

This is Flathead Audubon's primary fund raising project.
Proceeds support local conservation and educational programs such as

- ♦ **Distribution of *Audubon Adventures* to local 5th grade classes.**
- ♦ **Book Purchase Award to local elementary schools for library books on natural history.**
- ♦ **Scholarships for environmental education.**
- ♦ **Research grants for field studies of birds and bird habitat.**
- ♦ **Educational materials for lectures by Audubon members to local school classes and civic groups.**
- ♦ **Care and upkeep of local refuges such as Ninepipe Reservoir.**

Pick Up Locations: Please note your pick-up date, time and place on your calendar!

Bigfork: Lakehills Shopping Center
Saturday, Nov. 13, 10 am - 12 noon; 837-5018

Kalispell: Albertson's Parking Lot - east side
Saturday, Nov. 13, 12:30 - 2:30 pm; 755-2142

Whitefish: Train Depot Parking Lot
Saturday, Nov. 13, 12:30 - 2:30 pm; 862-8070

Condon: Call June Ash, 754-2289
for arrangements

Columbia Falls: Glacier Bank
Saturday, Nov. 13, 10 am - 12 noon; 892-3825

Polson: Super 1 Foods Parking Lot
Sunday, Nov. 14, 12 noon - 2 pm; 883-6895

✂ CLIP HERE

✂ CLIP HERE

Order Form

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

I will pick up my order **Saturday, November 13** in (check one)

Bigfork ☐ Columbia Falls ☐ Condon ☐ Kalispell ☐ Whitefish ☐

or **Sunday, November 14** in Polson ☐.

Name _____ Phone _____

Address _____

Are you a member ☐ non-member? ☐ Why not join? It's just \$20 (or \$15 for seniors).

✉ Send your order and check by **Nov. 6** to:

Flathead Audubon, c/o June Ash, P.O. Box 1129, Condon, MT 59826

FLATHEAD AUDUBON SOCIETY DIRECTORY

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Vice-President
Secretary
Treasurer
Past-President

Neal Brown, 560 Wolf Creek Dr., Bigfork, MT 59911 837-5018
Linda Winnie, P.O. Box 220, Kila, MT 59920 755-1406
Gail Sullivan, 932 Columbia Ave., Whitefish, MT 59937 862-5775
Bruce Tannehill, 239 Deer Trail, Whitefish, MT 59937 862-4548
Jim Rogers, P.O. Box 984, Polson, MT 59860 883-3611

DIRECTORS

1997-2000
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William Breen, 335 Mtn. Meadow Rd., Kalispell, MT 59901 755-2142
Sharon DeLong, 2495 Grave Creek Rd., Eureka, MT 59917 882-4501
Linda deKort, 290 Lost Creek Dr., Kalispell, MT 59901 755-3704
Leslie Kehoe, 1020 Holt Dr., Bigfork, MT 59911 837-4467
John Ashley, P.O. Box 154, West Glacier, MT 59936 892-3825
Ferne Cohen, P.O. Box 1782, Whitefish, MT 59937 862-2028
Sonja Hartman, P.O. Box 1388, Columbia Falls, MT 758-8516
Leo Keane, 514 Pine Place, Whitefish, MT 59937 862-5807
Robin Magaddino, 2100 Swan Hwy., Bigfork, MT 59911 837-4294
Brent Mitchell, 960 Keinas Rd., Kalispell, MT 59901 756-8130

CHAIRS

Audubon Adventures
Conservation
Field Trips
Hospitality

Kim Davis, 1230 Rhodes Draw, Kalispell, MT 59901 755-1311
Brent Mitchell, 960 Kienas Rd., Kalispell, MT 59901 756-8130
John Ashley, P.O. Box 154, West Glacier, MT 59936 892-3825
Lois Drobish, 324 Helena Flats Rd., Kalispell, MT 59901 756-7405
Tracy Schiess, P.O. Box 154, West Glacier, MT 59936 892-3825
Pattie Brown, 560 Wolf Creek Dr., Bigfork, MT 59911 837-5018
Gail Leonard, 514 Pin Place, Whitefish, MT 59937 862-5807
Jill & Mike Fanning, 380 Tally Lake Rd., Whitefish 59937 862-8070
Leslie Kehoe, 1020 Holt Dr., Bigfork, MT 59911 837-4467
Leo Keane, 514 Pine Place, Whitefish, MT 59937 862-5807
Linda Winnie, P.O. Box 220, Kila, MT 59920 755-1406

Librarian
Membership
Newsletter
Program
Publicity
Quality of Life
Refuge Projects
Wetland/Waterfowl

Lynn Kelly, 6525 Rocky Point Rd., Polson, MT 59860 883-5797
Neal Brown, 560 Wolf Creek Rd., Bigfork, MT 59911 867-5018

MONTANA AUDUBON

OFFICE
PRESIDENT

Janet Ellis, P.O. Box 595, Helena, MT 59624 443-3949
Howard Strause, 1917 W. Hill Pl., Great Falls, MT 59404 727-7516

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 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

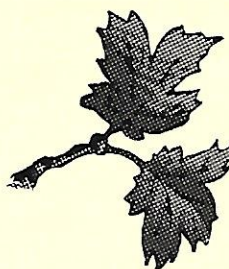
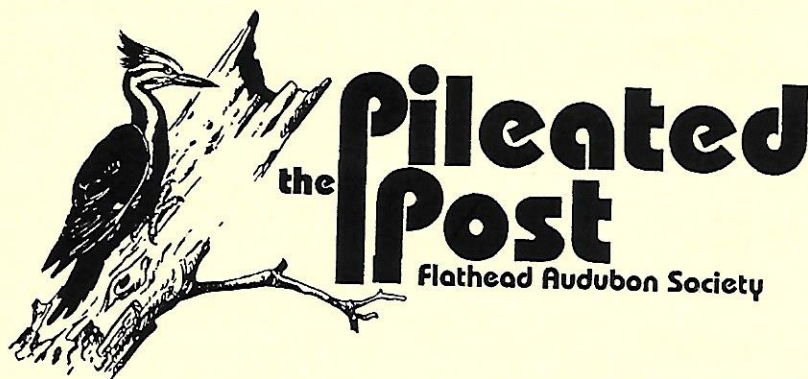
For Newsletter Only Send \$10 ☐

to: Flathead Audubon Society Membership;
P.O. Box 1129

Condon, Montana 59826

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

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October, 1999

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