



# the Flatheaded Post

Newsletter of the Flathead Audubon Society

VOLUME 25

NUMBER 7

OCTOBER, 2000

## FLATHEAD AUDUBON TO PUT BIRDS IN THE CLASSROOM

Flathead Audubon's new Flathead Classroom Mentor Program will be launched this spring. The goal of the program is to help local teachers incorporate lessons about birds and bird habitat in the Flathead Valley into their curricula. This spring, the emphasis will be on migratory songbirds and wetland birds that breed in the Flathead and the vital importance of riparian and wetland habitats.

Flathead Audubon is currently recruiting local third, fourth and fifth grade teachers to participate in the project. The chapter is also looking for local birders and naturalists interested in being trained to serve as classroom mentors. Teachers and mentors will be paired according to interests and geographical location.

In March, Bob Petty, Education Coordinator for Montana Audubon, will present a workshop to acquaint both teachers and mentors with existing bird education curricula and materials, such as the 'Songbird Blues' trunk and with related materials specific to the Flathead. Mentors will be trained and provided with materials for a 45-minute classroom presentation.

In the remaining spring months, the mentor will make this presentation to the teacher's class, and may work with the teacher to develop other bird-related educational activities appropriate to the class. These could include such things as schoolyard activities, field trips or individual student research projects.

The Flathead Classroom Mentor Program is being developed and organized by the FAS Education Committee under the leadership of its Chair, Sonja Hartmann, and with the assistance of Bob Petty. It is funded by an Environmental Education Grant awarded this summer to

Montana Audubon by the Environmental Protection Agency.

This is a great opportunity for local teachers and naturalists to learn more about birds in the Flathead, and to learn effective ways to share our knowledge and enthusiasm about birds with the kids. And we expect to have lots of fun in the process! Any **teachers or possible volunteers** who think they might be interested in participating in the program are encouraged to **contact Linda Winnie**, at 755-1406, for further information.

By Linda Winnie



### OCTOBER FIELD TRIPS

**October 7, 2000 A Hike along Autumn Creek in Glacier National Park.** Join Neal and Pattie Brown for an easy to moderate hike along Autumn Creek. We will be listening for elk bugeling, looking for bear tracks and watching for migrating raptors, not to mention enjoying the beautiful fall colors. Meet at the Belton Chalet at 10AM and we will carpool to the trailhead. Bring a lunch and be prepared for any kind of weather. For more information please call the Browns at 837-5018.

**October 15, 2000 Birdwatching at Smith Lake Wildlife Management Area.** Come join FAS for a morning of birding, we should see all kinds of migrating waterfowl and raptors. Meet at the Fish, Wildlife and Parks Building on Meridian in Kalispell at 8:30AM. Be prepared for fall weather. For more information please call Leslie Kehoe at 837-4467.





## CHICKADEE CHATTER

Fall is officially here and the skies are full of ducks and geese and flocks of little brown and black birds. The little brown and black ones land in the trees by the house by the hundreds and the trees come alive with sound and movement. It is a fine time for bird watching and listening to trees full of birds is not a bad pastime in my estimation.

The southward movement of the little feathered ones has not only begun here in Montana but other places as well. I was very recently in eastern Wyoming and the birds there were winging their way south as well. Wyoming is a remarkable place. The prairies of the eastern part of the state are rolling grasslands with little potholes tucked into hollows here and there.

It was a beautiful sunny day, very warm with a bit of a breeze blowing and I had been driving for 6 or 7 hours and was ready for a break. I stopped at a rest area just 30 miles or so from the South Dakota border. The first thing I heard when I opened the door of the vehicle was birdsong, there were birds everywhere. The rest area was located very near to one of the prairie potholes and there were giant old cottonwood trees lining the banks of a large pond full cattails and birds. I walked down the hill, very aware of a sign that stated that I should beware of rattlesnakes, and stopped under the shade of the huge old trees.

I stood still for a bit, listening and watching all the activity before me. Birds were flying everywhere, black ones, tiny ones, brown ones, speedy ones and flashes of yellow and orange that could only be birds. The trees and the cattails were very busy. On the ground in front of me a Black-headed Grosbeak walked out on the tall grass and onto the path looking for tasty tidbits. An American Robin flew over and was soon joined by another and another and another, I'm not sure how many there were as I lost count at 15.

The cattails at the edge of the pond were rustling and I watched as a pair of Brewer's Blackbirds waded out. into a patch of sunshine, their feathers iridescent in the sunlight, yellow eyes shining. They were searching for food in the shallow water. A Red-winged Blackbird landed on a branch of a dead cottonwood in front of me, its loud call echoing over the water. Shortly, a Gray Catbird joined the blackbird in the dead tree, it too was talking making its characteristic variety of interesting sounds. Off in the distance I heard a

wren and closer by a flash of orange became a Bullock's Oriole that landed on a leafy branch overhead.

There were a great number of Black-capped Chickadees flitting around the branches of the trees, making pointed comments to one another. On the fence in front of me a Brown-headed Cowbird landed and began preening.

A tiny black and orange bird became an American Redstart and it was gone as just as quickly as it came. A pair of sparrows were gleaning insects from a fallen tree at the edge of the wood, I couldn't tell exactly what kind of sparrow as they kept moving in and out of the dappled shadows.

Up in the tree above me a flit of yellow revealed a Yellow Warbler. I watched it for a until it flew away. As I walked back to the vehicle, up in the sky not far away a splendid hawk flew. It could only be the largest of the Buteos, a magnificent Ferruginous Hawk. It soared over the prairie and finally became a spot on the horizon.

I had stopped for 30 minutes and with great reluctance got back into the vehicle and continued on my way. One can find the most wonderful things in the most unexpected places. Have a good fall.

Leslie Kehoe



### OCTOBER MEETING

**MONDAY, OCTOBER 9, 2000**

**Fish, Wildlife and Parks Building**

**490 W. Meridian Road, Kalispell**

**Business Meeting begins at 5:30PM**

**General Meeting begins at 7:30PM**

**PROGRAM:** Doug Hawes-Davis of High Plains Films in Missoula will present **VARMINTS**, a documentary about prairie dogs. The film, which has been called the "Schindler's List of wildlife documentaries," chronicles the decline of the prairie dog in the west and highlights the fascinating ecology of the animal. Issues of animal rights, property rights, varmint hunting, ecology and politics are detailed in this thought provoking work. **VARMINTS** was the recipient of five awards at the 22nd International Wildlife Film Festival and promises to make you think a little more deeply about prairie dogs, regardless of which side of the controversy you're on. High Plains Films is a Montana-based non-profit production team that specializes in wildlife and natural resource issues. Their previous works include **SOUTHBOUND**, 1995 and **THE PAPER COLONY**, 1996.





## FAS MEMBER RELEASES FIRST BOOK

Flathead Audubon member, Ben Long has just released his first book, *Backtracking: By Foot, Canoe, and Subaru Along the Lewis and Clark Trail*. The book chronicles the journey that Long and his wife Karen Nichols (also a member of FAS!) took after quitting their jobs, selling their house and packing up their canoe and an old Subaru. Their goal was to re-trace the route taken by Lewis and Clark and report on the status of the wildlife that had so captivated the famous explorers on the original journey.

Each chapter of *Backtracking* is devoted to one of the creatures that Lewis and Clark discovered on their journey and gives the reader an update on its status in the present day West. Although Long found the wildlife of the West much diminished since the time of the original journey, he has managed to relate an engaging adventure into the remoter areas of the American West.

*Backtracking* is now available at local bookstores and Ben will be appearing at signing sessions throughout the west this fall.

## DON'T FEED THE BEARS!

Fall is upon us and bird enthusiasts are digging their dusty bird feeders out of storage in preparation for hanging. For those of us living in bear habitat, special precautions are needed.

Rick Yates, Glacier National Park biological technician recommended "that people get to know their property and adjacent lands." "If you see bears around your home regularly, or you see bear sign (scat, rub trees, diggings) then you might want to think really hard about putting out bird feeders."

There are ways to minimize the attractiveness of bird feeders and bird seed to bears: 1) hang your feeder at least 10 feet above the ground so it is out of a bear's reach; 2) suspend feeders on a strong wire between two trees, so bears (and other animals like squirrels) cannot reach the feeder by climbing the tree; 3) don't put too much bird seed in the feeder, put in just enough so that birds will eat all of the available seed each day (from both the feeder and the ground.) Remember: even though you may bring your feeder in at night, there may still be plenty of bird seed scattered on the ground beneath the feeder for bears to find! Be creative! Some Auduboners have been known to successfully rigged pulley systems to accomplish

this task. Just make sure you are being smarter than the average bear!

If you find any evidence that bears are visiting your bird feeders, please reconsider your decision to keep a bird feeder in your yard until after bears have gone into hibernation for the winter. Always remember: **A FED BEAR IS A DEAD BEAR**. For more information, contact Tim Manley at MT Fish, Wildlife & Parks or Eric Wenum at 756-1776.

By Meg Harr

## HAWK IDENTIFICATION CLASS OFFERED AT FVCC

Dan Casey will be teaching a short course that will cover hawks, eagles and falcons: where and when to find them, and how to separate similar species. The class will have an evening lecture on November 15<sup>th</sup> from 7-9PM and a field trip on Sunday November 19<sup>th</sup>. The field trip will be to local hot spots where migrant and resident hawk species can be seen, including the Mission Valley. The non-credit course is offered through Flathead Valley Community Colleges Continuing Education Program at a cost of \$29. For more information please contact the Continuing Education Center at FVCC at 756-3832.

## UPDATE ON CARA

Time if running out for CARA in this congressional session—the full Senate need to vote on the bill as soon as possible. This Congressional session will end October 6. Urge Senator Baucus and Senator Burns to support the passage of this important conservation funding bill before the end of the legislative session. The bill provides almost \$45 billion over the next 15 years for a broad array of federal, state and local resource-protection programs – programs aimed at protecting America's natural treasures: its birds and other wildlife, parks, coasts, forests and wetlands. CARA will provide more money in fact than this country has ever dedicated to natural resource conservation, just when it is needed most. From The National Wildlife Federation and The National Audubon Society websites.

**To contact Senator Baucus:** Phone: (202) 224-2651, Fax: (202) 228-3687, Email:

[max@baucus.senate.gov](mailto:max@baucus.senate.gov),

**To contact Senator Burns:** Phone: (202) 224-2644, Fax: (202) 224-8594, E-mail:

[burns@burns.senate.gov](mailto:burns@burns.senate.gov)







## FROM THE PRESIDENT



BIRDSEEDBIRDSEEDBIRDSEEDBIRDSEEDBIRDSEEDBIRDSEEDBIRDSEEDBIRD

Fall has arrived in the Flathead Valley and once again Flathead Audubon is offering CLEAN, MONTANA GROWN SUNFLOWER SEED. Fill out your order form today! Deliver is November 4 for Kalispell and Bigfork. November 5 for Whitefish and Columbia Falls. If you need seed before those dates--we will have the remainder of last years stock at our October 9 general meeting. The cost remains \$17 per bag.

### THE LAST WORD OF A BLUE BIRD

Bob Petty, Education Coordinator for Montana Audubon, Tells me; when people learn seven different bird species, as a child, as adults a high number of those people have a strong conservation ethic. It does not seem like a large chore to teach our children seven bird species.

This year, Pattie and I will go into one of the fourth grade classes of Bigfork for a half an hour each month. That is not much time but it should be enough to teach each child seven common birds of the Flathead Valley.

Give it a try with the children in you life. As told to a child:

"As I went out a Crow  
In a low voice said, "Oh,  
I was looking for you.  
How do you do?  
I just came to tell you.  
To tell Lesley (will you?)  
That her little Bluebird  
Wanted me to bring word  
That the north wind last night  
That made the stars bright  
And made ice on the trough  
Almost made him cough  
His tail feathers off.  
He just had to fly!  
But he sent Good-by.  
And said to be good,  
And wear her red hood,  
And look for skunk tracks  
In the snow with an ax-



And do everything!  
And perhaps in spring  
He would come back and sing."  
By Robert Frost,  
The Poetry of Robert Frost

The Birders Handbook tells me that the blue of a bluebird is not blue pigment. It is a "structural color". "The blues are produced by minute particles in the feather that are smaller in diameter than the wavelength of red light." This structure scatters the reflected light in all directions, giving the bird the same hue of blue, when seen from any direction. When the feathers are seen between the light source and the observer, the feather is seen as grey. This is true for all birds that appear blue. **By Neal Brown, President Flathead Audubon Society**



## A BIT AND A PIECE

- CELEBRATE NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE WEEK, OCTOBER 8-14. TAKE SOME TIME TO VISIT ONE THE WILDLIFE REFUGES WE HAVE IN OUR BACK YARD... THE NATIONAL BISON RANGE, NINEPIPE NWF, PABLO NWF, SWAN RIVER NWF AND THE NEWEST JEWEL IN THE REFUGE SYSTEM LOST TRAIL NWF. OCTOBER IS A GREAT TIME FOR BIRDWATCHING.
- THE GLACIER INSTITUTE PRESENTS ACLASS ON WILDERNESS FIRST AID ON OCTOBER 7 & 8 AT THE AERIE SCHOOL FOR BACKCOUNTRYR MEDICINE AT A COST OF\$150 THIS 16 HOUR INTRDUCTORY COURSE TO WILDERNESS MEDICINE TEACHES ILLNESS PREVENTION, PATIENT ASSESSMENT, AND LONG-TERM INJURY MANAGEMENT. THIS COURSE IS IDEAL FOR HUNTERS, SKIERS, HIKERS AND THOSE WHO LIVE IN RURAL AREAS. For more information please contact the Glacier Institute at 755-1211.





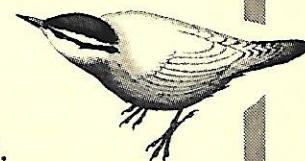
# Flathead Audubon's Annual Sunflower Seed Sale

**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, including new Lost Trail.**



**Pick Up Locations:** Please note your pick-up date, time and place on your calendar!  
Call the phone number for your area for more information.

**Bigfork: IGA Parking Lot**

Saturday, Nov. 4, 10 am - 12 noon; 837-5018

**Kalispell: County Fairgrounds - North Lot**

Saturday, Nov. 4, 12:30 - 2:30 pm; 755-1406

**Whitefish: Train Depot Parking Lot**

Saturday, Nov. 4, 12:30 - 2:30 pm; 862-2028

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

**Columbia Falls: Glacier Bank**

Saturday, Nov. 4, 10 am - 12 noon; 387-9058

**Polson: Super 1 Foods Parking Lot**

Sunday, Nov. 5, 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 4** in (check one)

Bigfork ☐ Columbia Falls ☐ Condon ☐ Kalispell ☐ Whitefish ☐

or **Sunday, November 5** 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 **Oct. 28** to:

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





## FLATHEAD AUDUBON SOCIETY DIRECTORY

## OFFICERS

President  
Vice-President  
Secretary  
Treasurer  
Past-President

Neal Brown, 560 Wolf Creek Dr., Bigfork, MT 59911  
Linda Winnie, P.O. Box 220, Kila, MT 59920  
Gail Sullivan, 932 Columbia Ave., Whitefish, MT 59937  
Bruce Tannehill, 239 Deer Trail, Whitefish, MT 59937  
Leo Keane, 514 Pine Place, Whitefish, MT 59937

837-5018  
755-1406  
862-5775  
862-4548  
862-5807

## DIRECTORS

1999-2002  
1999-2002  
1999-2000  
1999-2000  
1999-2000  
1999-2000  
1999-2000  
1999-2000  
2000-2001

Linda deKort, 290 Lost Creek Dr., Kalispell, MT 59901  
Leslie Kehoe, 1020 Holt Dr., Bigfork, MT 59911  
John Ashley, P.O. Box 154, West Glacier, MT 59936  
Ferne Cohen, P.O. Box 1782, Whitefish, MT 59937  
Sonja Hartman, P.O. Box 316, West Glacier, MT 59936  
Leo Keane, 514 Pine Place, Whitefish, MT 59937  
Robin Magaddino, 2100 Swan Hwy., Bigfork, MT 59911  
Brent Mitchell, 960 Kienas Rd., Kalispell, MT 59901  
Jill Fanning, 380 Tally Lake Rd., Whitefish, 59937

755-3704  
837-4467  
892-3825  
862-2028  
387-9058  
862-5807  
837-4294  
756-8130  
862-8070

## CHAIRS

Audubon Adventures  
Birdseed Sales  
Christmas Bird Count  
Conservation  
Education  
Field Trips  
Hospitality

Kim Davis, 1230 Rhodes Draw, Kalispell, MT 59901  
June and Rod Ash, P.O. Box, Condon MT 59826  
Dan Casey, P.O. Box 7922, Kalispell MT 59904  
Brent Mitchell, 960 Kienas Rd., Kalispell, MT 59901  
Sonja Hartmann, P.O. Box 316, West Glacier, MT 59936  
John Ashley, P.O. Box 154, West Glacier, MT 59936  
Lois Drobish, 324 Helena Flats Rd. Kalispell, MT 59901  
Tracy Schiess, P.O. Box 154, West Glacier, MT 59936  
Pattie Brown, 560 Wolf Creek Dr., Bigfork, MT 59911  
Gail Leonard, 514 Pine Place, Whitefish, MT 59937  
Jill and Mike Fanning, 380 Tally Lake Rd., Whitefish, 59937  
Leslie Kehoe, 1020 Holt Dr., Bigfork, MT 59911  
Leo Keane, 514 Pine Place, Whitefish, MT 59937  
Jeannie Marcure, 226 Cougar Trail, Whitefish 59937  
Pattie Brown, 560 Wolf Creek Dr., Bigfork, MT 59911  
Leslie Kehoe, 1020 Holt Dr., Bigfork MT 59911  
Neal Brown, 560 Wolf Creek Rd., Bigfork, MT 59911

755-1311  
754-2289  
857-3143  
756-8130  
387-9058  
892-3825  
756-7405  
892-3825  
837-5018  
862-5807  
862-8070  
837-4467  
862-5807  
862-4806  
837-5018  
837-4467  
867-5018

OFFICE  
PRESIDENT

Janet Ellis, P.O. Box 595, Helena, MT 59624  
Dorothy Poulsen, P.O. Box 595, Helena MT 59624

442-3949  
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. 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



# the Pileated Post

Flathead Audubon Society

PO Box 9173  
Kalispell, MT 59904

D BRENT MITCHELL  
KAY MITCHELL  
960 KIENAS RD  
KALISPELL

MT 59901-7215

## 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  
380 Tally Lake Rd.,  
Whitefish, MT 59937

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

N54 7XCHA



October, 2000

Non-Profit Org.  
Prsrt std  
Postage Paid  
Permit No. 115  
Kalispell, MT  
59901-9173