APRIL 2020

# Sacajawea Audubon News

*Sacajawea Audubon builds on an interest in birds to promote the conservation of our natural environment through enjoyment, education, and action*

# COVID 19 & Sacajawea Audubon Society

## CANCELLED SPRING 2020 EVENTS

- ❒ **April Monthly Membership Program**
- ❒ **World Migratory Bird Day**
- ❒ **Earth Day Celebration**
- ❒ **Sage-Grouse Lek Tour**
- ❒ **SAS Book Group Discussion**

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE:

I never expected to be dealing with a worldwide pandemic, but here we are. As a result of coronavirus, and following CDC March 15 guidelines to limit the spread of this disease; Sacajawea Audubon Society (SAS) is cancelling all activities through May 10th. This includes all programs, field trips, bird walks, classes, and meetings. Committee and board meetings that can be held electronically or by phone should do so. The SAS Board of Directors will revisit the situation in 2-3 weeks to decide if we need to cancel our remaining May activities as well. The CDC guidelines are being updated daily, so please keep checking the SAS website for the most current chapter news. The health of our members and the community as a whole is our top priority and none of our activities are more important than that. Thank you for your understanding. We urge our members to get outside and go birding. It is a great way to beat the coronavirus blues.

Lou Ann Harris

Lou Ann Harris
President, Sacajawea Audubon Society
pres@sacajaweaaudubon.org

# Innovative Design Features *of the* Indreland Audubon Wetland Preserve

*Prepared by: R. McEldowney, PWS, Confluence Consulting Inc.*

The Indreland Audubon Wetland Preserve (IAWP) being developed on the east side of Bozeman by the Sacajawea Audubon Society has several innovative features that are being integrated into the design that make the wetland extremely functional and maximize the habitat 'bang for the buck.' First and foremost the design highlights the historic condition of this area of the East Gallatin River first noted by Captain William Clark in July 1806. His notes indicate that the East Gallatin River was so thick with beaver and multiple thread channels as to be impassable by boat. The design mimics a beaver pond complex and so will provide an accurate glimpse into what this area would likely have looked like during pre-settlement times by European settlers.

Inherent in this design is the habitat interspersion of different wetland types that typically develop in areas surrounding beaver dams. The interspersion of open water areas, marshlands, wet meadows, willow and alder dominated areas, as well as cottonwood and aspen forest habitat create numerous niches to support a diverse array of flora and fauna, that maximize the productivity of the site at numerous trophic levels.

In addition the design provides a significant improvement in wetland function, particularly with regards to general wildlife habitat, water quality improvements, short and long term surface water storage, production export/food chain support, groundwater discharge, habitat uniqueness, and recreation/education potential.

## Wetland Bird Walks *at the* Indreland Audubon Wetland Preserve

**NOTE: THESE WALKS ARE SCHEDULED BUT MAY BE CANCELLED OR RE-SCHEDULED AS THE COVID-19 SITUATION EVOLVES AND CDC RECOMMENDATIONS CHANGE**

Curious about the exciting wetlands preserve that Sacajawea Audubon is acquiring and restoring? Eager to see some great birds without leaving the city? Join Sacajawea Audubon guides for **Friday morning bird walks**!

**DATES**: May 15, 22, 29 and June 5, 12, 19. **TIME**: 8:00–10:00 am

Meet outside at Café M (777 E. Main St.) for a brief talk about the wetlands and our vision for its future. We will then take a short walk to the preserve. Bring your binocs and your enthusiasm for birds and wetlands while we explore this special area. All birding abilities welcome and no registration needed.

Contact Paulette Epple at conservation@sacajaweaaudubon.org for more information.

# BIRD NOTES

*by John Parker*

During the second week of March the waterfowl migration really started in earnest, and on March 9th Travis Kidd discovered a male **Eurasian Wigeon** among the numerous American Wigeon and Mallards resting on the far bank at Central Park Pond. The Eurasian Wigeon continued to be seen by many observers for the next three days. As the ice was starting to melt off the east shore of Ennis Lake on March 12th, Vic Fesolowitz found a single **Greater White-fronted Goose** with the Canada Geese.

Locally, the first **Sandhill Crane** of the year was seen by Don Profota on March 8th, three miles south of Bozeman. During the following week, cranes were being spotted at numerous locations across this area's valleys.

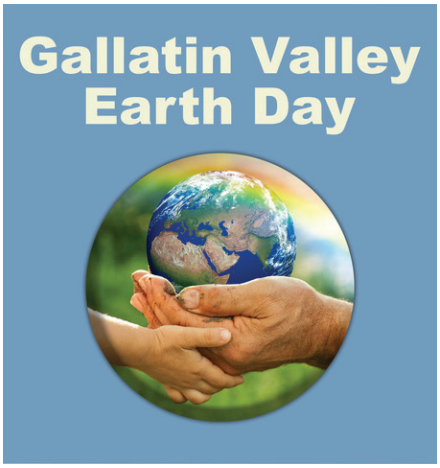
On March 15th at the intersection of Cleveland and Tracy in Bozeman, an immature **Northern Goshawk** was seen by Reuben Rich feeding on a freshly killed Mallard. During January and February, another or the same immature Northern Goshawk had been observed by Beth Madden hunting Mallards, chickens, and squirrels along Fairway Drive, about a mile south of this more recent sighting.

Now is the best time of the year to go outside in the evening or early morning to listen for owls. While **Great Horned Owls** have been very vocal for the past two months, some of the smaller and harder to detect owls really begin vocalizing during March and continue actively calling until June. Local canyons, campgrounds, and quiet forest roads are all good locations for a bit of owling. If you have the opportunity on a nice calm night, go outdoors, enjoy the night, and maybe you'll hear one of several owl species that nest in southwestern Montana.

*Eurasian Wigeon photo by Lou Ann Harris.*

## Gallatin Valley Earth Day Festival Update

*Due to the recent COVID-19 global pandemic, Gallatin Valley Earth Day will mark the 50th Anniversary of Earth Day:*




**LOCALLY**: We will host local online events.

**GLOBALLY**: We will join the Earth Day Network, the global organizer of Earth Day, for the first **digital Earth Day**, on **April 22nd** to address the most urgent threats to people, and our planet—including birds. (For more information, visit www.earthday.org and www.earthday.org/press-release/coronavirus-announcement-digital-earth-day)

We will continue to monitor the situation. We hope to schedule an in-person Earth Day festival for the fall, once our community's health is no longer in danger from the COVID-19 pandemic.

Meanwhile, please join us for locally sponsored events such as an interesting on-line Webinar, "Saving our Planet (and money) 2," about sustainable buildings, March 30th at 7 pm. For more information, check our website at gallatinvalleyearthday.org and events at facebook.com/gallatinvalleyearthday.

## *Plants for Birds:*

# Blanket Flower

*(Gaillardia, Indian Blanket Flower)*

- **Scientific Name:** *Gaillardia aristata* (Asteraceae Family)
- **Height:** 18-30"
- **Hardiness:** Zone 3
- **Wildlife Value:** Attracts native bees, butterflies and other pollinators, provides seeds for small birds

*By Leslie Eddington*

Blanket flower, Gaillardia aristata, is a vibrant, colorful, long-lived perennial native to most of western North America including all 56 counties of Montana. The bright, yellow/orange colors of the inflorescence are said to resemble the patterns woven into Indian blankets thus giving the plant the common name of Indian blanket flower. These showy flowers attract a wide variety of pollinators such as native bees, cryptic moths, butterflies, and other beneficial insects. In turn the rich supply of insects attracts insectivorous song birds as well as upland game birds like sage grouse and sharp-tailed grouse. Juncos, sparrows, and finches feed on the seeds when they mature.

Blanket flower is an important element of several habitat types in Western Montana. It is found in open, dry spaces of prairies and foothills, along roadsides and disturbed sites and has also been recorded in several types of riparian plant communities. It's considered a mid-succession plant and can grow in large, dense populations and is sometimes used for restoration of disturbed sites. It's a favorite in many native seed mixes as well.

In the garden, plant this species in a well drained, sunny site as it obtains optimum growth in full sun. It tends to grow 18-30 inches tall and does well in a variety of soil types from loam to gravelly/sandy. It is very hardy and is also very drought tolerant. Blanket flower can be purchased locally or established from seed or plant divisions. It is easily seeded as the seeds do not need cold stratification, with spring seeding being the preferred method over fall planting. It's a widely cultivated ornamental plant that also works well in the "cut-flower" garden.

Invite pollinators and birds to your yard with Gallardia aristata. With its low water needs and long-lasting color it is an excellent choice for a water-wise, bird-friendly garden.

## Drink Coffee That's Good For Songbirds!

For many of us, the best part of waking up in the morning is a cup of freshy brewed coffee—and the songs of birds! One way to continue experiencing both of these things is to brew bird friendly coffee.

Bird friendly coffee is grown in agroforestry systems, which means the coffee is grown in the shade, under a canopy of native trees. These agro-ecosystems mimic natural forest conditions, providing a high degree of biodiversity and critical habitat for birds, insects, and other wildlife while also helping combat the effects of deforestation. For more information visit: sustainabledevelopment.un.org.

If you're interested in Smithsonian Migratory Bird Center certified Bird Friendly coffee, the **Sacajawea Audubon Coffee Club** makes it easy to purchase this coffee online. For more information, visit: https://sacajaweaaudubon.org/drink-coffee-thats-good-for-songbirds/

By drinking Bird Friendly coffee, we can help save birds, one cup at a time!

*~ Lisa Miklush*

# Bird Health

*by Debi Naccarto, RPh, MS*

I am sure, by now, we all have a heightened sense of awareness of proper hand washing, disinfecting a work surface area, and keeping a safe distance from others so we minimize the spread of this contagious disease. Did you know that birds are susceptible to flu viruses and bacterial infections as well? Not COVID-19, but there are other pathogens responsible for infecting our bird population.

Mycoplasma Conjunctivitis (commonly known as Finch Eye Disease) is caused by a unique strain of *Mycoplasma gallisepticum*, a parasitic bacterium previously known to infect only poultry but has now become a problem with backyard birds. The disease probably spreads most rapidly where the birds sleep together in large, crowded roosts.

Infected birds have red, swollen, runny, or crusty eyes; in extreme cases the eyes become swollen shut or crusted over, and the birds become essentially blind. Birds in this condition obviously have trouble feeding. You might see them staying on the ground, under the feeder, trying to find seeds. If the infected bird dies, it is usually not from the conjunctivitis itself, but rather from starvation, exposure or predation as a result of not being able to see. So far, the disease is most prominent in House Finches. However, a few reports of the disease have been confirmed in American Goldfinches, Evening Grosbeaks, and Pine Grosbeaks, all members of the family Fringillidae.

Salmonellosis is a general term for any disease in animals and people caused by a group of bacteria known by the Latin name Salmonella. Birds can die quickly if the Salmonella bacteria spread throughout the body. Abscesses often form in the lining of the esophagus and crop as part of the infection process. Infected birds pass bacteria in their fecal droppings. Other birds get sick when they eat food contaminated by the droppings.

It is a common cause of mortality in feeder birds, but the symptoms are not always obvious. Sick birds may appear thin or fat and fluffed up and may have swollen eyelids. They are often lethargic and easy to approach. Some infected birds may show no outward symptoms but are carriers of the disease and can spread the infection to other birds. Salmonellosis is primarily transmitted by fecal contamination of food and water by sick birds, though it also can be transmitted by bird-to-bird contact. Occasionally, outbreaks of the disease cause significant mortality in certain species including Pine Siskin, Common Redpoll, and American Goldfinch.

Healthy Bird Feeding Techniques are the most beneficial way to help the birds. Bird feeders with cracks and crevices are difficult to sanitize and should not be used. Replace them with new feeders. Clean feeders, bird baths and all hardware at least quarterly with a 10% bleach solution and rinse thoroughly before filling them again. Periodically move feeders to new locations in the yard to avoid the build up of waste materials and feces and keep the ground below and around feeders clean. Give the birds more space and spread the feeders apart. Too much competition and close quarters stress the birds which in turn, compromises their immune function. Should you find a dead bird, use gloves while handling it and always wash your hands with anti-bacterial soap after working your feeders. Do NOT try and care for the bird.

In conclusion, whether it's a human infection or an avian infection-wash your hands, use disinfectants, and stay away from large crowds.

*Rosy Finches photo by Lou Ann Harris.*

**THE FOLLOWING EVENTS ARE SCHEDULED BUT MAY BE CANCELLED OR RE-SCHEDULED AS THE COVID-19 SITUATION EVOLVES AND CDC RECOMMENDATIONS CHANGE.**

# 2020 Sacajawea Audubon Spring Birding Series

Participants in all trips will meet at the front parking lot of the Museum of the Rockies at 6:45 AM and depart at 7:00 AM unless otherwise noted. Car pools will be arranged at the museum; an offer to help with gas to the person driving is always appreciated but not mandatory. Dress for the weather; good footwear is a must as field trip conditions are not always dry. Bring any food or beverages that you will need during the course of the trips, and some of the longer trips might require that you pack a lunch. Please turn off your cell phones and keep unnecessary conversations to a minimum. Some field trips are limited to a certain number of participants. Contact the trip leader for more details about any trip, and to sign up for the trip. We encourage all skill levels of birders to participate. Come have a good time and learn something new.

### May 16, Saturday: Sweet Grass County Prairie Bird Tour

**Leader:** Beth Madden **406-224-1012**
bethmadden64@gmail.com

*(The 5-6 hour driving tour should wrap up by early-mid afternoon)*

Celebrate spring migration on the prairies! We will follow an approximately 40-mile driving route through prairie and agricultural landscapes north of Big Timber, with a 45 minute walk on some prairie lands. Past trips have yielded curlews, cranes, raptors, and prairie songbirds from bobolinks to longspurs. Stops at wetlands will feature water birds. 16 person limit. Meet in Big Timber (Big Timber is 63 miles east of Bozeman on Interstate 90) at the Town Pump located at I-90 Exit 367 at 8:00 AM for car-pooling.

### May 23 Saturday: Trail Creek Road

**Leader:** John Parker **406-586-5863**
birdsightings@sacajaewaaubon.org

*(Until early afternoon; easy walking on forest trails and road)*

This 20-mile route along Trail Creek Road is a beautiful drive across the north end of the Gallatin Range. Travelling from Paradise Valley back to Bozeman this route passes through many diverse habitats; riparian areas along the Yellowstone River, juniper/sage lands, and higher elevation coniferous forests. Western Tanager, Swainson's Thrush, Golden Eagle, Spotted Towhee, Willow Flycatcher, Calliope Hummingbird are just a few of the species we should see. 12 person limit.

### May 24, Sunday: Mount Ellis

**Leader:** Don Profota **406-579-3200**
dprofota@gmail.com (email preferred)

*(4–5-hour trip; moderately strenuous walking 3 miles)*

This slow-paced hike of approximately 3 miles, will explore a number of habitats on State and Forest Service lands, including grassland, aspen meadow, and conifer forest edge. At this time of year many of the nesting birds, such as Calliope Hummingbirds, Red-naped Sapsuckers, Dusky Flycatchers, Orange-crowned Warblers, and a wide variety of sparrows will have arrived on their territories. Along with terrific views of the Gallatin Valley, the wildflowers on this walk will likely distract you from the diversity of birds. 12 person limit.

### May 26, Tuesday: Sourdough Nature Trail

**Leader:** Don Profota **406-579-3200**
dprofota@gmail.com email preferred

*(4-5 hour easy walking)*

After leaving the MOR parking lot, this trip will begin at the Gardner Park entrance. The trail is an easy, level stroll following Sourdough Creek. This trip is at the peak of the breeding season so we should see and hear a variety of flycatchers, thrushes and warblers. Some of the neotropic birds nesting here are Northern Waterthrush, American Redstart, and Black-headed Grosbeak. 8 person limit.

### May 26, Tuesday: Owl Prowl 2

**Leader:** Tom Forwood **406-570-6432**
tjfishing75@gmail.com (email preferred)

Early spring is known as the time of owls, but did you know most continue to vocalize and stand vigil over their territories until June. At this time our other nocturnal specialists show up, the nightjars. Montana features 2 nightjars and the earliest arriving is also the harder to find-Common Poorwill. We will travel east of Bozeman and work along Trail Creek and Divide Roads crossing from Gallatin to Park County.

*Photo by Lou Ann Harris.*

This is potentially one of the most productive Poorwill spots in the area and includes diverse habitat that could also produce multiple owl species. We will meet at the Museum of the Rockies parking area at 7:30 PM. Round-trip time for this trip will likely be around 4 hours so plan on a late return. 12 person limit

### May 30, Saturday: Shields Valley Driving Tour

**Leader:** Forrest Rowland **814-573-1391**
rowbird2005@gmail.com

*(Options for half to full day)*

The Shields Valley is home to some impressive diversity. When we leave Clyde Park, we will check some backroads and the riparian corridor along Highway 89 for nesting species as well as any migrants passing through. They should be out in force. We will also visit two separate marshes on the tour in search of Marsh Wren, Virginia Rail, and Sora. One of the highlights will be the visit to Cottonwood Reservoir which can host an impressive variety of migrant shorebirds and waterfowl including displaying Western and Eared Grebes. The nearby sagebrush environs are a good chance to study Brewer's Sparrow and Sage Thrashers. Finally, we will head up the Shield River Valley drainage to explore some coniferous and montane riparian habitats to round out the experience! Meet at the Clyde Park Post Office parking lot, at 7:30 AM for car-pooling.

### May 31 Sunday: Triple Tree Trail

**Leader:** Lou Ann Harris **406-600-3585**
montlou311@gmail.com

*(5 hour trip; moderately strenuous climbing 500 ft, 4 miles)*

As this trail climbs the hillside it passes through a number of habitats, and transitional edges between them. At the bottom of the mountain, grassland quickly gives way to brushy deciduous habitat as the trail crosses Limestone Creek, where Ruffed Grouse, Calliope Hummingbirds, and Lazuli Buntings are some of the birds to expect. The trail then ascends through Douglas fir and lodgepole pine forests with a wide variety of nesting birds, including Cassin's Vireo, Swainson's Thrush, and Western Tanager. This trip features perhaps the greatest diversity of any short hike in the Gallatin Valley. 12 person limit.

### June 5-7

Please join us at the **2020 Montana Audubon Bird Festival** in Lewistown, MT. Contact Montana Audubon at (406) 443-3949 or go to www.mtaudubon.org Come join the fun.

### June 13, Saturday: Limestone Creek Canyon

**Leader:** Martha Collins **406-579-0506**
marthacoll@msn.com

*(1/2 day trip walking on a small trail, with some rough and steep terrain for 4 miles)*

Limestone Creek is the least disturbed drainage in the Gallatin foothills south of Bozeman. This lightly used area is a refuge for a wide variety of wildlife that requires deep forests for cover, including some old growth spruce-fir. Some of the birds to expect on this trip include Cassin's Vireo, Golden-crowned Kinglet, Swainson's Thrush, and MacGillivray's Warbler. 10 person limit.

*continued on page 8*

## 2020 Spring Birding Series

### June 14 ,Sunday: Glen Lake Park (East Gallatin Recreation Area)

**Leader:** Adele Pittendrigh **406-599-5086** adele.pittendrigh@gmail.com

*(4–5 hour trip; easy walking at most 2 miles)*

There are many possibilities at this local birding hotspot. Over 180 bird species have been seen in the recreation area. With a pond, riparian habitat, limited grassland, and mature cottonwoods we hope to see good diversity of what Gallatin Valley has to offer during peak breeding season. Species may include flycatchers, Warbling Vireo, Gray Catbird, several warblers, Lazuli Bunting, and Black Headed Grosbeak. 12 person limit.

### June 20, Saturday: Mission Creek

**Leader:** Robin Wolcott **406-581-5418** pajaros@wewolcotts.com(emailpreferred)

*(Until mid-late afternoon; mostly driving with light walking on roads)*

In the rolling prairie just east of Livingston we will seek McCown's Longspur and Long-billed Curlew. Along Little Mission Creek we will watch for riparian species, then search for residents of the spruce/fir forest. On our return along Mission Creek we could find a Cordilleran Flycatcher or a Golden Eagle. Over 130 species have been seen along this route including Sprague's Pipit, Upland Sandpiper, and Green-tailed Towhee. Spectacular views, abundant wild flowers, and wildlife make the trip through the northern foothills of the Absaroka Mountains a trip to remember. After leaving Bozeman, we will reconvene at Albertson's parking lot in Livingston at 7:30 AM and then leave from there at 7:45 AM Car-pooling is essential. 14 person limit.

*Beaver Ponds Trail, Yellowstone National Park. NPS/Dave Krueger.*

### June 27, Saturday: Sixteen Mile Creek

**Leader:** Tom Forwood **406-570-6432** tjfishing75@gmail.com (email preferred)

Come see one of Gallatin County's hidden birding gems. Tucked away at the north end of the county is Sixteen Mile Creek. This remote drainage offers serene beauty and some fantastic bird life. Large numbers of Veerys, Lazuli Buntings, Spotted Towhees and even some Yellow-breasted Chats make the creek bottom their home. The trip will travel up to the Middle Fork Canyon where many Cordilleran Flycatchers call home and other mountain habitat species reside as well. The return trip usually figures extensive Common Nighthawk activity. This trip requires a bit of dirt road driving, though they are generally in good shape by this time. We will meet at the NE corner of the Belgrade Albertson's parking lot at 4:00 PM and will be returning after dark, so plan to pack a to go meal or have an early dinner. Round-trip time will likely be 5+ hours. 15 person limit.

### June 28, Sunday: Rocky Mountain Road Bluebird Trail

**Leaders:** Janne Hayward **406-587-6124** jannehayward@gmail.com, and Lou Ann Harris **406-600-3585** montlou311@gmail.com

*(1/2 day)*

Get up close and personal with Mountain Bluebirds. Join bluebirders Janne Hayward and Lou Ann Harris, as they check bluebird nest boxes and band adults and nestlings along Rocky Mountain Road. This is a rare opportunity to get an inside look at the lives of these amazing birds, including nest building, egg laying and raising young. The participants on this trip will meet at 8:30 AM, at the north end of the Target parking lot. Due to the sensitive nature of the work, we are limiting these field trips to 8 participants.

### July 1, Wednesday: Yellowstone Natl Park

**Leader:** John Parker **406-586-5863** birdsightings@sacajaweaaudubon.org

*(Full day trip—12 hours)*

This trip will cover several locations in the Mammoth area. On our way to Mammoth we will spend some time birding in the Gardiner Basin, looking for some of the birds that frequent this arid zone outside of Gardiner. The remainder of the morning and early afternoon we will be hiking the 5-mile Beaver Ponds Trail. The Beaver Ponds Trail features a wide variety of birdlife at it passes through open forests, sagelands, and skirts several small ponds. Mid to late afternoon, we will cover other locations on the northern range that are close to Mammoth. 7 person limit. Meet at the Museum of the Rockies at 6:30 AM.

# Stay out in the field with Montana Audubon's 2020 Citizen science programs!

## Great Blue Heron Rookeries Survey

The Great Blue Heron is a species of concern in Montana. Their status is a result of a 2.2% annual population decline measured by Breeding Bird Surveys from 1966-2010. The colonial bird relies on intact rivers and streamside habitat to establish their nesting colonies, with on impact, it can affect many at one time. There are many rookery sites all over Montana and many can be difficult to find or access. Currently, most of the surveys are conducted by aircraft and flying over al Montana waterways regularly is unrealistic.

Montana Audubon has partnered with the Montana Natural Heritage program to ensure better state-wide coverage of annual heron rookery surveys. From the comfort of our desk, we used Google earth's aerial photography and satellite imagery to look over five sections of major Montana rivers. We happened to fine 94% of historic rookeries by using the survey technique! Now comes a call of action to get boots on the ground and confirm our findings. We are looking for volunteers state-wide to help confirm potential new rookeries, population, conservation opportunities, and threats for our Great Blue Herons in Montana.

Check out our Great Blue Heron citizen science webpage at montanabirdsurveys.com for more updates and announcements of new trainings.

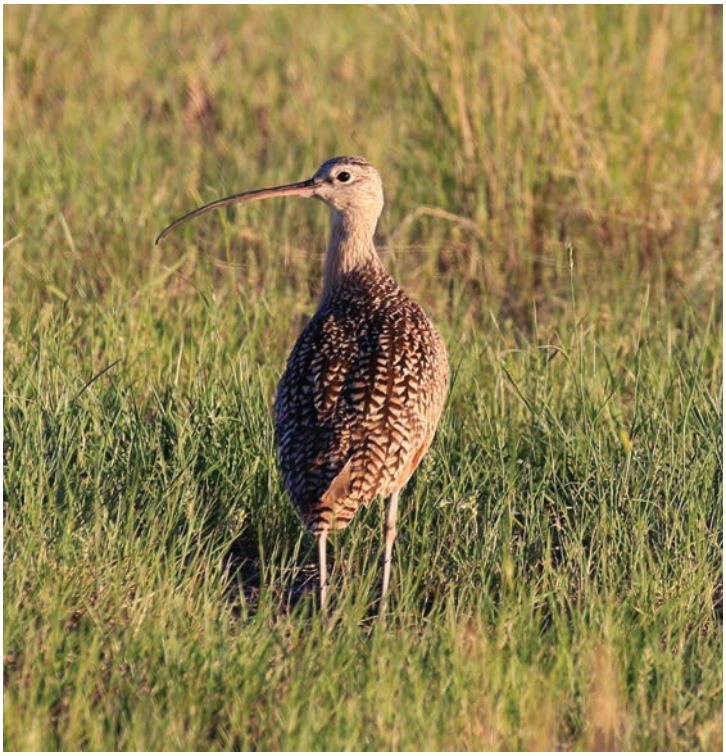
Please contact Amy Seaman at aseaman@mtaudubon.org or Carmen Borchelt at carmen@mtaudubon.org to get set up for the survey!

## Long-billed Curlew Survey

Long-billed Curlews offer the perfect opportunity for citizens to get out early in the spring to help collect details on local curlew hotspots. Further, hearing and seeing their breeding displays and defense calls makes the survey effort worth it. Plus, it's easy!

Survey routes consist of early morning road-side stops repeated every half mile. At each stop, you will get out of the car for five minutes and look and listen for curlews. Along the way, you will collect important data on the time, habitat, and presence or absence of curlews.

The best way to get involved is to visit our survey website, montanabirdsurveys.com, to view the routes available in the Flathead & Mission Valleys, Blackfoot valley, and Helena/Canyon Ferry areas. Surveys should be completed April 8–May 7 and May 8–May 31.



*Long-billed Curlew photo by Lou Ann Harris.*

Please contact Amy Seaman at aseaman@mtaudubon.org or Carmen Borchelt at carmen@mtaudubon.org to get set up for the survey!

Don't forget, you can use our in-field data collection app on any smartphone or smartdevice! The application is called "Survey 123" and there is a how to guide on our website listed above. Amy or Carmen will happily guide you through on how to use the app!

## Climate Watch Survey—Thank you!

Thank you to everyone who participated in the Climate Watch Survey! Nuthatches and many other birds are vulnerable to habitat change or loss and this is what the survey hopes to document using the data you collected! The best aspect of this survey is that it can be conducted anywhere in Montana. As you can see in the picture below there are plenty of survey opportunities! Only the blue boxes below have been claimed! The next survey period will be May 15–June 15. Please contact Carmen Borchelt at carmen@mtaudubon.org for more information or to sign up for a summer square!

*Photo by Ronan Donovan.*

**THIS TOUR MAY BE CANCELLED OR RE-SCHEDULED AS THE COVID-19 SITUATION EVOLVES AND CDC RECOMMENDATIONS CHANGE.**

# RED ROCK LAKES NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE TOUR: MAY 22–25, 2020

***Explore a vast array of habitat, ranging from high elevation wetland and prairie habitat at 6,600 feet, to the mountain forests of the Centennial Mountains.***

Red Rock Lakes National Wildlife Refuge is located in the incredibly scenic and isolated Centennial Valley of southwestern Montana, about 50 miles west of Yellowstone National Park. This 4-day, 3-night tour will take you into a vast array of habitat, ranging from high elevation wetland and prairie habitat at 6,600 feet, to the mountain forests of the Centennial Mountains (which ascend to over 10,000 ft. above sea level). It is this diverse, wetland-prairie-sagebrush-montane environment that gives Red Rock Lakes its unique character. Nesting birds are abundant throughout Red Rock Lakes National Wildlife Refuge at this time of year, with 120+ species possible. Red Rock Lakes is best known for being the primary location for heroic efforts in the 1930s to save the Trumpeter Swan from extinction. In addition to the majestic swan, there are another 230 bird species within the refuge, including: Long-billed Curlew, Sandhill Crane, Red-necked Grebe, Black-crowned Night-Heron, American White Pelican, Sora, White-faced Ibis, American Avocet, Willet, Northern Harrier, Bald & Golden eagles, Swainson's & Ferruginous hawks, Prairie Falcon, Short-eared Owl, Sage Thrasher and various ducks, flycatchers, kinglets, warblers, vireos, tanagers, thrushes, woodpeckers and, if we're lucky, Greater Sage-Grouse!

**TOUR COST:** $995/person Double occupancy; $1,195 Single occupancy; $1,245 Non-member

**TRIP INCLUDES...**

- Fully guided trip with National Geographic Photographer & Wildlife Biologist Ronan Donovan.
- A photography workshop.
- Small group size (no more than 12 participants).
- Travel from Bozeman to the Refuge by 4WD drive Suburbans or passenger van.
- 3 nights lodging at Elk Lake Resort.
- Dinner Friday, Saturday, and Sunday. Breakfast and lunch Saturday, Sunday, and Monday.

**To register or if you have questions, call Loreene Reid at 406-600-6666 or email** loreener@sacajaweaaudubon.org

## SACAJAWEA AUDUBON SOCIETY OFFICERS AND COMMITTEE CHAIRS

### Board of Directors:

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| President | Lou Ann Harris<br>pres@sacajaweaaudubon.org |
| Vice President | John Edwards<br>johnedwards@sacajaweaaudubon.org |
| Secretary | Emma Narotzky<br>sec@sacajaweaaudubon.org |
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| Member at Large | Chris Nixon<br>chrisnixon@sacajaweaaudubon.org |
| Member at Large | Forrest Rowland<br>forrestrowland@sacajaweaaudubon.org |
| Member at Large | Billy Burton<br>billyburton@sacajaweaaudubon.org |
| Member at Large | Travis Kidd<br>education@sacajaweaaudubon.org |
| Member at Large | Debi Naccarto<br>debinaccarto@sacajaweaaudubon.org |
| Member at Large | Stephanie Nelson<br>stephanienelson@sacajaweaaudubon.org |

### Committee Chairs & Project Leaders:

| | |
|---|---|
| Conservation Chair | Paulette Epple<br>conservation@sacajaweaaudubon.org |
| Education Chair | Travis Kidd<br>education@sacajaweaaudubon.org |
| Bird Sightings | John Parker<br>birdsightings@sacajaweaaudubon.org |
| Field Trips | John Parker<br>birdsightings@sacajaweaaudubon.org |
| Newsletter | Stephanie Nelson<br>newsletter@sacajaweaaudubon.org |
| Book Club | Sherry Staub<br>hospitality@sacajaweaaudubon.org |
| Website | Stephanie Nelson<br>stephanienelson@sacajaweaaudubon.org |
| Membership | Loreene Reid<br>membership@sacajaweaaudubon.org |
| Hospitality | Sherry Staub<br>hospitality@sacajaweaaudubon.org |
| Wetlands | Karin Jennings<br>wetlands@sacajaweaaudubon.org |

# SAVE THE DATE!

# Give Big Gallatin Valley, April 30–May 1

**GIVE BIG GALLATIN VALLEY**, the annual day of giving to non-profits, is from April 30 to May 1st. Sacajawea Audubon Society is again participating. This year, our fundraising focus is for our new "Plants For Birds Garden" at Story Mill Community Park.

Sacajawea Audubon Society plans to install a "Plants for Birds Demonstration Garden" highlighting native plants that can be used in landscaping to attract birds, pollinators and other wildlife. The proposed garden incorporates almost 100 plants of 35 species in a 730 square foot bed.

Linda Iverson, a professional landscape designer and past president of the Montana Native Plant Society, has contributed the garden design work. The design will include interpretive signs to educate visitors and generate enthusiasm for providing habitat in yards and gardens throughout the community. It will be located within the "Learning Garden" of the new 60-acre Story Mill Community Park in Bozeman. We plan to use this demonstration garden and the nearby community center as a place to give presentations and classes promoting landscaping for birds for years to come.

Donate online beginning at 6 p.m. April 30th through 6 p.m. May 1st. Visit givebiggv.org/organizations/sacajawea-audubon-society

**Sacajawea Audubon Society**
**P.O. Box 1711**
**Bozeman, MT 59771-1771**

*Change Service Requested*

**Sacajawea Audubon Society**, affiliated with the National Audubon Society, meets on the second Monday of each month, September through May.

**Sacajawea Audubon Society Monthly Newsletter** is available electronically to all Sacajawea Audubon Society members September through May. Members and non-members can receive a mailed paper newsletter for an annual $10 subscription fee. Please send your check to the address above.

Deadline for article submission is the 15th of the month preceding the month the articles will appear. Send articles electronically to Stephanie Nelson at: newsletter@sacajaweaaudubon.org.

**Change of Address:** If you have a change of address or are away, please notify membership@sacajaweaaudubon.org. Undeliverable mailed newsletters are returned to us for an extra fee.

Find more at the **Sacajawea Audubon Society website** at: sacajaweaaudubon.org

## BECOME A MEMBER OR RENEW YOUR ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP TODAY!

### Sacajawea Audubon Society Membership 2020

Individual or Family

☐ Basic Membership ..... $25

☐ Supporting Membership ..... $50
*(Supporting local conservation & education project)*

☐ Additional Donation .....$_____
- ☐ *Bridger Raptor Study*
- ☐ *Education*
- ☐ *Story Mill Park Bird Feeding Station*
- ☐ *Wetland Campaign*
- ☐ *Wherever is Needed*

Name _____

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❖ Sacajawea Audubon News is sent by email. There is a $10 annual fee for a paper copy mailed to you.
☐ *I would like a paper newsletter mailed to me and have included an additional $10 to cover the annual cost.*

❖ We do not share your information except with Montana Audubon, so your contact information is safe with us.

Mail this form with your check to:

*Sacajawea Audubon Society*
*Attn: Membership*
*PO Box 1711*
*Bozeman, MT 59771-1711*

Thank you for your membership and donation. We look forward to birding with you!