SacajaweaAudubonNews

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

Calendar at a Glance

April 11th	SAS Monthly Meeting
April 21st	SAS Bookclub
April 23rd - June 25th	SAS Birding Series
April 28th - June 18th	SAS Birding Workshops
April 24th - June 29th	IBA Surveys
June 3rd - 5th	MT Bird Festival

Book Group
"Upbeat Alternative to Doom-and-Gloom"

The SAS Book Group will meet on April 21, 2016, to discuss Subirdia: Sharing Our Neighborhoods with Wrens, Robins, Woodpeckers, and other Wildlife by John Marzluff. The final book of this year's reading season is Adventures in the Anthopocene: A Journey to the Heart of the Planet We Made, by Gaia Vince. The book promises a "well-documented, upbeat alternative to doom-and-gloom prognostications." We will discuss the first-half of this book (chapters 1-5) on June 2 and the second half in September. Book discussions start at 5:30PM at the Hope Lutheran Church. For more information or if you are new to the book group, please contact Adele Pittendrigh. (adele.pittendrigh@gmail.com)

Ospreys on the Yellowstone

Monday April 11th, 2016 at 7pm
Hope Lutheran Church
2152 W. Graf Street in Bozeman

John James Audubon wrote of Ospreys: *"The habits of this famed bird differ so materially from those of almost all others of its genus, that an accurate description of them cannot fail to be highly interesting to the student of nature."* His words still apply today. Watching an Osprey dive feet first into the water, sometimes submerging completely, before rising from the surface with a struggling fish leaves a lasting impression for birder and non-birder alike. Ospreys are one of Montana's most recognizable and charismatic raptors, nesting throughout the western third of the state and along large rivers in the prairies.

The Yellowstone Valley Audubon Society in Billings has monitored Osprey nests along the Yellowstone River since 2009. YVAS focuses conservation efforts on Ospreys because the population is increasing, most pairs are building nests on power poles and thereby coming into conflict with utility companies, and nestling mortality from entanglement in baling twine is evident. In 2009 three volunteers located 22 nests while today 30 volunteers hustle along 300 miles of river during summer to monitor over 85 nests. Marco Restani, Director of Conservation for Montana Audubon, directs the research components of the YVAS Osprey project. His presentation will review population ecology, behavior, and conservation of this widespread, unique raptor.

Dr. Marco Restani joined Montana Audubon in December 2015 to serve as Director of Conservation. Originally an 'Army Brat', Marco has lived andworked throughout Montana since 1983. He received a BS from the Universityof Montana, MS from Montana State, and PhD from Utah State studying Bald Eagles along the Missouri River near Helena. Following post-doctoral research at the University of Washington, Marco was a Professor for 15 years at Rocky Mountain College in Billings and at St. Cloud State University in Minnesota. He spent seven summers in Greenland studying Peregrine Falcons and Common Ravens, two summers in Australia studying Tasmanian Devils, and four winters guiding ecotourists to the Falkland Islands, South Georgia, and Antarctica. Since 2012 Marco has been collaborating with Yellowstone Valley Audubon to monitor nesting Ospreys along the Yellowstone River. He is an 'Elective Member' of the American Ornithologists' Union and a 'Certified Wildlife Biologist' with The Wildlife Society.

2016 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. 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.

April 23 Saturday: Shields Valley Driving
Tour Leader: Forrest Rowland
814-573-1391 or rowbird2005@gmail.com.
(Options for half to full day)
Visit Shields Valley's birding hot spots with local guides. The array of habitats visited will range from dense riparian, lush agricultural, shortgrass prairie, and sage flats at lower elevations, up through mixed Douglas Fir and Pine forests to high-elevation Sub-alpine Fir, depending on road conditions. We will also spend plenty of time birding Cottonwood Reservoir , which will surely be loaded with waterfowl and shorebirds at this peak time of year.
Meet at the Clyde Park Post Office parking lot, at 7:00 AM for car-pooling.

May 7 Saturday: Paradise Valley Driving Tour
Leader: Mitch Hurt
406-223-4919 or wildbirdhunting@gmail.com
(Options for half- to almost full day)
Visit Paradise Valley birding hotspots with local guides – spring creeks, Yellowstone River, prairies/hillsides, and Dailey Lake. The diversity of habitat covered on the trip, along with it being the beginning of songbird migration, should yield a huge variety of birds.
Meet at Livingston Albertson's parking lot, northeast corner at 7:30 AM for car-pooling.

May 8 Sunday: Headwaters State Park
Leader: Martha Collins
586-9478 or 579-0506 or marthacoll@msn.com
(1/2 day trip; easy walking)
The Headwaters area includes a variety of habitats, including sage/grassland and riparian, so anything from waterfowl to sparrows can occur. One of the unique features of the Headwaters area are the limestone cliffs, which support several cliff nesting species such as Prairie Falcons and White-throated Swifts. The park, which is situated along the Missouri River corridor, is an ideal location to observe early spring migrants. Those wishing to meet at the Headwaters area contact the trip leader.
15 person limit.

May 14 Saturday: Old Town Road and Milligan Canyon
Leader: Tom Forwood
570-6432 or fwptforwood@gmail.com
(1/2 day trip; mostly driving with light walking on roads)
This trip begins along the cottonwood bottomlands of the Jefferson River, and then abruptly moves into dry greasewood/sage scrubland habitat. Birds along this section will range from Dusky Flycatchers and Bullock's Orioles, to Sage Thrashers and Brewer's Sparrows. The route then cuts through the arid limestone cliffs of Milligan Canyon. Canyon Wrens, Rock Wrens, and Spotted Towhees frequent this dry landscape. Golden Eagles and Pinyon Jays are also a possibility along this portion of the trip.
15 person limit

May 14 Saturday: Sweet Grass County Prairie Bird Tour
Leader: Beth Madden 406-224-1012 or
bethmadden64@gmail.com
(5-6 hour driving tour, wrap up by early-mid afternoon)
Celebrate International Migratory Bird Day on the prairies! We will follow an approximately 40-mile driving route through prairie and agricultural landscapes north of Big Timber. Past trips have yielded curlews, cranes, raptors, and prairie songbirds from Bobolinks to longspurs. Stops at wetlands will yield water birds**.**
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 15 Sunday: Mount Ellis
Leader: John Parker 586-5863 or conundrumjp@gmail.com
(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.

2016 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. 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 21 Saturday: Triple Tree Trail
Leader: Lou Ann Harris
600-3585 or 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

May 21 Saturday: Paradise Valley Driving Tour
Leader: George Kelly
406-220-0282 or gjkingfisher@gmail.com
(Options for half- to almost full day)
Visit Paradise Valley birding hotspots with local guides – spring creeks, Yellowstone River, prairies/hillsides, and Dailey Lake. The diversity of habitat covered on the trip, along with it being the peak of songbird migration should yield a huge variety of birds.
Meet at Livingston Albertson's parking lot, northeast corner at 7:30 AM for car-pooling.

May 22 Sunday: East Gallatin Recreation Area
Leader: Brad Barth 4
06-640-2628 or barth.brad@gmail.com
(3-4 hour trip; easy walking at most two miles)
There are lots of possibilities with this local area. Over 180 bird species have been seen in the recreation area. We will be searching near the peak of migration, so we hope for some surprises. With a pond, riparian habitat, limited grassland, and mature cottonwoods we hope to see good diversity of what Gallatin Valley has to offer. Species may include several Warblers, Lazuli Bunting, Gray Catbird, Warbling Vireo, Black Headed Grosbeak, Osprey, and flycatchers. The walk will be at a leisurely pace with lots of stops to listen. Bathrooms are nearby throughout. **12 person limit**

May 28 Saturday: Mission Creek
Leader: Robin Wolcott 581-5418 pajaros@wewolcotts.com
(Till mid-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

June 3-5: Please join us at the 2016 Montana Audubon Bird Festival in Missoula, MT
Contact Montana Audubon at **(406) 443-3949** or go to **www.mtaudubon.org**. Come join the fun.

June 9 Thursday: Sourdough Nature Trail
Leader: Adele Pittendrigh
599-5086 or Adele.pittendrigh@gmail.com
(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.
12 person limit.

2016 Sacajawea Audubon Spring Birding Series

June 11 Saturday: Spanish Creek
Leader: John Parker,
586-5863 or conundrumjp@gmail.com
(4-5 hours; moderately strenuous walking on forest trail, with several hundred foot elevation gain)
This trip follows Spanish Creek through the Flying D Ranch, to the edge of the Lee Metcalf Wilderness. At the trailhead there is an interesting juxtaposition of habitats. In one direction the trail borders the wet willow riparian area along Spanish Creek, where Willow Flycatchers and Lincoln's Sparrows nest. While going in the other direction, the trail climbs through dry open slopes where you can expect to see Green-tailed Towhees, Brewer's Sparrows, and Lazuli Buntings.
12 person limit.

June 12 Sunday: Rocky Mountain Rd Bluebird Trail
Leaders: Janne Hayward
587-6124 or jannehayward@juno.com Lou Ann Harris
600-3585 or 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.
Due to the sensitive nature of the work, we are limiting these field trips to **8 participants**.

June 12 Sunday: Rocky Mountain Rd Bluebird Trail
Leaders: Janne Hayward 587-6124 jannehayward@juno.com , and Lou Ann Harris 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.
Due to the sensitive nature of the work, we are limiting these field trips to **8 participants**.

June 18 Saturday: Kelly Canyon and Battle Ridge
Leaders: Ron and Cheryl Farmer 586-3987
songbird@wispwest.net
(1/2 day trip; driving and walking along gravel roads)
This trip passes through open fields, then climbs past dry juniper- covered hillsides, mature wetlands, mixed woodlands, and eventually reaches into the conifer forest. Mountain Bluebirds, Spotted Towhees, Calliope Hummingbirds, Black-headed Grosbeaks, and Western Tanagers are just a few of the species that we should see along this route. After Kelly Canyon, this trip will continue up Bridger Canyon to Battle Ridge. At this higher elevation a new suite of breeding birds makes this area home. Williamson's Sapsuckers, Brown Creepers, Swainson's Thrushes are a few of the nesting species in this area.
12 person limit

June 24 Friday: Montana's Nightjars at Lewis & Clark Caverns
Leader: Tom Forwood at 406-570-6432
fwptforwood@gmail.com
(2 1/2 hour; 2-3 mile walk)
Check out Montana's two species of Nightjar, the Common Nighthawk and the more elusive Common Poorwill. The park is known for some of its interesting breeding bird species and the Poorwill is one of the more unusual. We will walk up the park road for a mile or so at dusk to check out some of the arid country daytime species such as Mountain Bluebirds, Spotted Towhees and Rock Wrens. Once it gets dark we will look for high flying Nighthawks and low flying Poorwills with the possibility for some owls and several bat species as well. Insect repellent, good walking shoes and layering clothing for changing conditions are recommended.
Meet at the lower Visitor Center parking lot at 7:30 PM. 15 person limit

June 25 Saturday: Cherry River and Middle Cottonwood
Leader: Brad Barth
406-640-2628 or barth.brad@gmail.com
(4-5 hours; moderate walking with some rocky terrain; 2 to 3 miles total)
On this walk we will travel to two different habitat types looking for diversity. First we will travel to Cherry River looking for species such as Sora, several duck species, Yellow-headed Blackbirds, kingbirds, Yellow Warblers and more. Cherry River is more open country with riparian habitat along the East Gallatin. Then we will drive to the Middle Cottonwood Trailhead to look for species such as Western Tanager, MacGillivray's Warbler, Calliope Hummingbird, Lazuli Bunting, Green-tailed Towhee, Swainson's Thrush. Middle Cottonwood has a mix of riparian habitat, mature north facing conifers, and relatively dry open south facing hillside. We hope that these two locations will provide an interesting mix of species without having to travel a great distance from Bozeman.
12 person limit

2016 SACAJAWEA AUDUBON BIRDING WORKSHOPS

Birds inspire curiosity and a sense of wonder. Ever wonder who exactly is whistling "Hey Sweetie!" outside your window in the wee hours of the morning? Or how to identify a bird based on a flash of yellow feathers? Or what the little brown bird in the woodpile is called? Or why she's there in the first place? To help you answer all of these questions and more, Sacajawea Audubon Society is offering a BEGINNING BIRDING WORKSHOP and -- *new this year* -- an INTERMEDIATE BIRDING WORKSHOP, as well as the return of the INTRO TO BIRD LANGUAGE workshop.

All courses will be taught by Ashley Martens, an experienced birder, naturalist, and outdoor educator. Ashley's approach to teaching birding engages all of your senses to tune in to what you see, hear, and love about the wild birds around us. Contact Ashley at ashmartens@yahoo.com or 208-883-4998 for more information and to register for all classes detailed below.

BEGINNING BIRDING IN FOREST AND FIELD WORKSHOP

Participants will be introduced to the basics of birding through 3 evening classroom sessions and 3 field trips to a variety of habitats in the valley. We will cover bird families, common birds in our region, and what to look and listen for when seeking out the identity of a bird.

Classroom Sessions: Thurs eves **April 28, May 19, and June 9**	6:30-8pm	Hope Lutheran Church
Field Trips: Saturday mornings **April 30, May 21, and June 11**	7-10am	Various Locations

Cost: $95 for Sacajawea Audubon members; $115 for non-members. Please make checks payable to "Sacajawea Audubon Society" and mail to Ashley Martens at 42 Hitching Post Rd., Bozeman, MT 59715.
Maximum 8 students. Supply lists will be provided upon registration.

INTERMEDIATE BIRDING WORKSHOP

This is the perfect class for birders who want to boost their birding skills up a notch and start studying more details of plumage, bird behaviors, and more sight and sound identification tips. We will spend some extra time on common families of birds in our region that can be challenging to identify such as warblers and sparrows. We'll meet 2 evenings in the classroom and take 2 field trips to hone our skills.

Classroom Sessions: Thurs eves **June 2 and 16**	6:30-8pm	Bozeman Public Library
Field Trips: Saturday mornings **June 4 and 18**	7-10am	Various Locations

Cost: $70 for Sacajawea Audubon members; $90 for non-members. Please make checks payable to "Sacajawea Audubon Society" and mail to Ashley Martens at 42 Hitching Post Rd., Bozeman, MT 59715.
Maximum 8 students. Supply lists will be provided upon registration.

INTRO TO BIRD LANGUAGE WORKSHOP

Birds are the true messengers of the forests. They can tell us if there's a fox hiding in the brush, a person about to run down the trail, a sharp-shinned hawk about to fly through. Come learn the ancient art of bird language in an introductory class taught by naturalist Ashley Martens. We'll learn the 5 voices of the birds as well as some alarm patterns. Then we'll head out for a short "bird sit" to look and listen for those voices. Bird language can inform us on a much deeper level what is going on in the forest. Awareness of bird language also inevitably leads to a deeper awareness of self. (How do birds respond when YOU move through the woods?)

Monday	**June 6th**	6-8pm	Sourdough Nature Trail (Gardner Park Trailhead).

Cost: Free for participants in our other workshops, $5-10 donation for others to support Sacajawea Audubon's growing educational programs.
Maximum 12 students. No supplies necessary.

-Ashley Martens
True Nature Education

American Birding Association Principles of Birding Ethics

Everyone who enjoys birds and birding must always respect wildlife, its environment, and the rights of others. In any conflict of interest between birds and birders, the welfare of the birds and their environment comes first.

Code of Birding Ethics

1. **Promote the welfare of birds and their environment.**
   - 1.1. Support the protection of important bird habitat.
   - 1.2. To avoid stressing birds or exposing them to danger, exercise restraint and caution during observation, photography, sound recording, or filming.
     - 1.2.1. Limit the use of recordings and other methods of attracting birds, and never use such methods in heavily birded areas, or for attracting any species that is Threatened, Endangered, or of Special Concern, or is rare in your local area.
     - 1.2.2. Keep well back from nests and nesting colonies, roosts, display areas, and important feeding sites. In such sensitive areas, if there is a need for extended observation, filming, photography, or recording, try to use a blind or hide, and take advantage of natural cover.
     - 1.2.3. Use artificial light sparingly for filming or photography, especially for close-ups.
   - 1.3. Before advertising the presence of a rare bird, evaluate the potential for disturbance to the bird, its surroundings, and other people in the area, and proceed only if access can be con-trolled, disturbance minimized, and permission has been obtained from private landowners. The sites of rare nesting birds should be divulged only to the proper conservation authorities.
   - 1.4. Stay on roads, trails, and paths where they exist; otherwise keep habitat disturbance to a minimum.

2. **Respect the law, and the rights of others.**
   - 2.1. Do not enter private property without the owner's explicit permission.
   - 2.2. Follow all laws, rules, and regulations governing use of roads and public areas, both at home and abroad.
   - 2.3. Practice common courtesy in contacts with other people. Your exemplary behavior will generate goodwill with birders and non-birders alike.

3. **Ensure that feeders, nest structures, and other artificial bird environments are safe.**
   - 3.1. Keep dispensers, water, and food clean and free of decay or disease. It is important to feed birds continually during harsh weather.
   - 3.2. Maintain and clean nest structures regularly.
   - 3.3. If you are attracting birds to an area, ensure that birds are not exposed to predation from cats and other domestic animals, or to dangers posed by artificial hazards.

4. **Group birding, whether organized or impromptu, requires special care.** Each individual in the group, in addition to the obligations spelled out in Items #1 and #2, has responsibilities as a Group Member.
   - 4.1. Respect the interests, rights, and skills of fellow birders, as well as people participating in other legitimate outdoor activities. Freely share your knowledge and experience, except where code 1(c) applies. Be especially helpful to beginning birders.
   - 4.2. If you witness unethical birding behavior, assess the situation, and intervene if you think it prudent. When interceding, inform the person(s) of the inappropriate action, and attempt, within reason, to have it stopped. If the behavior continues, document it, and notify appropriate individuals or organizations.

5. **Group Leader Responsibilities [amateur and professional trips and tours]:**
   - 5.1. Be an exemplary ethical role model for the group. Teach through word and example.
   - 5.2. Keep groups to a size that limits impact on the environment, and that does not interfere with others in the same area.
   - 5.3. Ensure that everyone in the group knows of and practices this code.

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The ABA Code of Birding Ethics may be freely reproduced for distribution/dissemination

Important Bird Area Surveys

This past winter has just been declared the warmest winter on record for the United States. On March 5th volunteers conducted a survey of the Madison Valley IBA and noticed the effect. The warming trend had certainly played out in the Madison Valley with little snow remaining on the valley floor and Ennis Lake already one quarter open. In-spite of strong winds that kept many of the songbirds down and less visible we had the highest number of species (43) for any of our counts this early in the month. The number of individual birds seen for an early March count was also the highest ever due to the large number of waterfowl on Ennis Lake.

Some other highlights and observations: The number of Bald Eagles seen (64) was about double the average! They were concentrated on, and around, Ennis Lake, probably feeding on the waterfowl present. Only 1 Rough-legged Hawk was seen. It seems they left early due to the mild winter. Early migrants found included Tree Swallows (3), Robins, Red-winged Blackbirds, Mountain Bluebirds, and an American Kestrel. The most unusual bird seen was a Green-tailed Towhee which wintered over at the El Western Motel and has been coming in to their feeders.

If you would like to put your birding skills to good use, join us on our next IBA surveys. We'd love your help!
April 24th – Headwaters IBA Contact Martha Collins – marthacoll@msn.com (579-0506)
April 30th – Madison Valley IBA Contact Martha Collins – marthacoll@msn.com (579-0506)
June 18th – Headwaters IBA Contact Martha Collins – marthacoll@msn.com (579-0506)
June 29th – Madison Valley IBA Contact Paulette Epple – bigskyepples@msn.com (580-6186)

KESTRELS THANK BOY SCOUT TROOP 676!

Boy Scout Quinn Powell and Troop 676 have provided Sacajawea Audubon with 20 beautifully crafted cedar kestrel nest boxes. As Quinn was casting about for a good idea for his Eagle Scout project he learned of our Kestrel Nest Box Program. The American Kestrel is in decline and this historically common little falcon has become a rare sight in many regions of North America. Researchers do not have sufficient data to understand why these long-term, wide-spread population declines are occurring. Sacajawea Audubon has partnered with the American Kestrel Partnership, installing nest boxes to provide more quality nest sites and sending nest box monitoring data to their national database.

Quinn solicited donated lumber and materials from Kenyon Noble in Bozeman and organized his troop's construction of the 20 boxes. He and others from his troop and family helped Sacajawea volunteers to install the boxes throughout the Gallatin Valley. Now as we wait for the kestrels to return to their breeding grounds we want to send a big shout-out of thanks to Quinn Powell and his Troop 676 for a wonderful project very well done!!

Announcing: Birds of Montana Pre-Order Sale at Buteo Books

Buteo Books is pleased to announce the forthcoming publication of the **Birds of Montana**, a comprehensive reference to state's avifauna. Authors Jeff Marks, Paul Hendricks, and Daniel Casey provide a thorough review of the status, distribution, relative abundance, ecology, and conservation of the 433 species that have been recorded in the state since Montana joined the Union in 1889. Illustrated with 155 color range maps, 73 original drawings of individual species, and 16 full-color habitat photos. This special pre-publication offer is only available through Buteo Books; orders must be received by May 15th. Receive your copy of ***Birds of* Montana** by mail, or in person at Montana Audubon's *Wings Across the Big Sky Festival* in Missoula June 3-5, 2016, co-sponsored by the Five Valleys Audubon Society.

Order by May 15th and pick up your copy at the meeting, June 3! Be among the first to receive your copy! Just select *Pick up in Missoula* when adding your copy to your cart.

Take Action Now!
Support Purchase of Inholding in 3 Montana Wildlife Management Areas

Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks (FWP) is taking comments on a proposal to purchase almost 9,300 acres of inholdings within 3 Wildlife Management Areas (WMA) on the east side of the Continental Divide. The inholdings, currently leased by FWP, are currently "school trust land" and could create management conflicts long-term (explained below). Specifically:

- In the Sun River WMA, buy 18 parcels spreading across 3,410 acres
- In the Blackleaf WMA, 639 acres in three parcels are proposed for purchase; and
- In the Beartooth WMA, 5,438 acres in 12 parcels are proposed for purchase.

Please write Montana Fish, Wildlife, & Parks TODAY to ask them to complete the purchase 9,488 acres of inholdings within Wildlife Management Areas. This purchase will help long-term management of these areas for wildlife. Comments must be received by 5:00 pm on Friday, April 8th, 2016. There are three easy ways to send your comments:

- Comment on the FWP website: http://fwp.mt.gov
- Email: fwprg42@mt.gov
- Mail: Gary Bertellotti, Regional Supervisor, Region 4 FWP, 4600 Giant Springs Road, Great Falls, MT 59405

Proposed Change of Bylaws

The Board of Directors of Sacajawea Audubon Society would like to amend the Bylaws with changes that will allow us to have a fully functioning board of 11 members.

1. Currently there is an unrealistic expectation on a past president to continue to serve on the board for many more years beyond their presidency. We propose to drop the requirement that one board position be filled by the past president and instead allow for one more at-large director. The past president could still be elected to serve on the board in any position if they choose.
2. To address circumstances when a board member is unable or fails to fulfill their responsibilities we propose adding language which would allow the removal of a director for cause.

To accomplish this, ARTICLE III, Section 2 would be amended to read as follows:

*The Board shall be composed of the Society's four (4) officers (see article IV, section 1), whose terms on the Board shall be concurrent with their term of office; ~~the immediate Past President in ex-officio status, who will serve on the Board until replaced by the next outgoing President;~~ and ~~six (6)~~ **seven (7)** at-large Directors elected from the membership, each for a term of two (2) years. Three (3) of these at-large Directors shall be elected in odd-numbered years and ~~three (3)~~ **four (4)** in even-numbered years. Any Board member is eligible to succeed himself (herself) and, subsequently, may be elected to any office. All Directors shall be members of the Society in good standing. All Directors shall be elected by a majority vote of the members present at the Annual Meeting. Any vacancies occurring during a term of office shall be filled by appointment by the Board until the expiration of that term. **Directors may be removed from the Board of Directors for cause, subject to approval of two thirds of the remaining board.***

A vote to approve these amendments will be taken at the Annual Meeting on May 9, 2016, 7 pm at Hope Lutheran Church.

Bird Notes

Early March is usually the time to be watching for our earliest spring migrants. The past two exceptionally warm Februarys may have us rethinking when to expect the early spring migrants like Sandhill Cranes, Tree Swallows, and Mountain Bluebirds. While there were a couple of anomalous crane sightings earlier in February this year, the first major wave of crane reports across southern Montana, seems to have started with the February 27th sighting of two **Sandhill Cranes** by Mike Myers, near Harrison. Notably, three **Tree Swallows** were spotted over the Madison River south of Ennis, on March 5th, by Audrey Evers, Joel Evers, and Roxanna McLaughlin. This Tree Swallow sighting was about 2-3 weeks earlier then the historic first arrival date for the species, and the second earliest ever. The early bluebird sweepstakes winner was Glenda Barnes, who found three **Mountain Bluebirds** along Buffalo Jump Road on February 27th.

On February 26th, Vic Fesolowitz and Kim Obbink spotted an early **Turkey Vulture** near Springdale east of Livingston. Vic had another nice find at Cottonwood Reservoir March 12th, when he found a **Greater White-fronted Goose** along with a flock of Snow Geese. Greater White-fronted Goose is always an uncommon migrant through this part of southern Montana, but especially so during the spring migration with only one other local record for the spring period.

The most outrageously early migrant was the **Say's Phoebe** that was discovered February 26th at the Cobblestone Fishing Access site south of Three Forks, by Tom Forwood. The previous early arrival date for Say's Phoebe was March 15, 2007, with the typical expected first sighting occurring the first week of April.

-John Parker

Thank you to all our sharp-eyed birders for reporting your great sightings. Please report your Bird Sightings by the 9th of the month to John Parker at 586-5863 or birdsightings@sacajaweaaudubon.org

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June 3-5, 2016
Missoula, Montana

The annual Bird Festival is fast approaching. You should have received your registration brochure by now, so please register early by mailing the registration page or go online at www.mtaudubon.org. Field trips are already filling up —while still plenty of options available, but you may not get your first choice. If you're registering online, you only choose one field trip per day as the system will not allow you to register for a trip that is full; if you are registering by mail, be sure to include 1st, 2nd and 3rd choices.

Rooms have been blocked at the Holiday Inn Downtown. Call 1-406-721-8550 or 1-800-399-0408 and mention you're with Montana Audubon (code MAS) to get the discounted rate.

Each year Montana Audubon recognizes outstanding individuals who work for the conservation and protection of birds and other wildlife by presenting **Awards** at the Saturday evening banquet. We are currently seeking nominations in the following categories: Lifetime Achievement Award, Educator of the Year, Conservationist of the Year, Citizen Scientist of the Year, and Special Achievement Award. To make a nomination, download a nomination form at www.mtaudubon.org/about/awards.html. Nominations are due at the office by May 19, 2016. Mail completed forms to *Montana Audubon, PO Box 595, Helena MT 59624*.

Register soon and join us in Missoula in June. You will be treated to wonderful birding and non-birding tours, Friday evening and Saturday afternoon speakers, Erick Greene, Kate Davis, Jeff Marks, and American Prairie Reserve. Special items this year: purchase your copy of the new *Birds of Montana Book—co-authors will be available for signing*; PLUS be in on the beginning of our celebration of our 40th year!

Sacajawea Audubon Society
P.O. Box 1711
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Sacajawea Audubon Society, affiliated with the National Audubon Society, meets on the second Monday of each month, September through May.

Sacajawea Audubon News is sent to all Sacajawea Audubon Society members monthly September through May. Deadline is the 15th of the month preceding the month articles will appear. Please send to: **Mary Cloud Ammons, 503 Bozeman, Bozeman MT 59715** or **newsletter@sacajaweaaudubon.org**.

Change of Address: Please notify Karin Jennings at **587-2279** or **membership@sacajaweaaudubon.org** if your address changes**.** When you move or are away, newsletters are returned to us for an extra fee.

Find more at the **Sacajawea Audubon Society Website** at: **http://www.sacajaweaaudubon.org/**

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