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

Jan 4th	Ruby Valley CBC
Jan 9th	SAS Meeting
Jan 19th	SAS Bookclub
Feb 23rd - 24th & March 2nd - 3rd	Bird Photography Class (Level I)
March 8th - 11th	Bird Photography Class (Level II)
June 9th - 11th	MT Audubon Annual Festival

Veracruz River of Raptors Project

Monday January 9th, 2016 at 7pm
Hope Lutheran Church
2152 W. Graf Street in Bozeman

Steve Hoffman recently retired as Executive Director of Montana Audubon, serving in this capacity for more than decade (2006-2016). He has devoted his entire 38-year career to wildlife conservation. After 10 years of government service (mostly as an Endangered Species Biologist for the US Fish & Wildlife Service in the American Southwest), Steve founded *HawkWatch International*, a not-for-profit organization dedicated to monitoring and conserving hawks, eagles and other raptors across the American West (he launched the Bridger Raptor Migration Project in 1991). Steve moved to Bozeman more than 12 years ago from his birth state of Pennsylvania. He has authored more than 35 scientific papers on raptor migration ecology & conservation, and endangered species management. Steve has given dozens of presentations on the identification, migration and conservation of raptors to diverse audiences throughout the US and abroad. He earned his M.S. degree in Wildlife Ecology from Utah State University (Logan, UT) in 1979.

Steve will present an overview of the ***Veracruz River of Raptors Project*** (VRR), located near the Gulf Coast in eastern Mexico. This project was developed to monitor the largest raptor migration on Earth (4-6 million raptors of >20 species are tallied each autumn). As co-founder of the project, Steve will summarize how VRR was launched, and will provide an overview of key findings from this remarkable 25-year raptor population monitoring effort. Steve will also highlight his upcoming fall 2017 birding tour to Veracruz (through *Merlin Birding Tours*), including opportunities to view this absolutely stunning raptor migration spectacle; participants will also enjoy many other diverse birding experiences in central and southern Veracruz - over 300 bird species may be observed on this trip!

Good Reads with SAS Bookclub: *What the Robin Knows*

On January 19th, the SAS Book Group will discuss *What the Robin Knows: How Birds Reveal the Secrets of the Natural World* by Jon Young. The book promises to teach us how robins and other birds use a universal bird language that communicates about what is going on in the environment. Everyone is welcome to participate in the book group, which meets from 5:30-6:45 in the Hope Lutheran Church. If this is your first time attending one of the discussions, please send email to Adele Pittendrigh at adele.pittendrigh@gmail.com.

Bird Photography Classes Offered in March

Sacajawea Audubon is pleased to offer two bird photography classes as part of our 50th Anniversary celebration! Both classes will be taught by well-known local photographer Carol Polich. These in-depth classes will be a great precursor to our Tom Murphy Photography Workshop being held in May.

Carol has been widely published in the USA and internationally with her photos and travel adventure stories since the early 1990's. She not only continues to travel and work with a variety of publishers but she also leads several photo workshops in the western USA. During the year, Polich currently teaches a variety of highly successful photography classes through the Bozeman Adult Community Education program. A list of her accomplishments can be viewed by googling her name and checking out her website: www.wildnaturetrails.com

****To sign-up, please contact Stephanie Nelson via email (preferred) at s.n.mayfly@gmail.com, or call (406) 587-3052. Payment will be required prior to the class.**

Bird Photography Level I for DSLR cameras only

This class is for those of you who want to get out of Program or Auto modes and learn how to shoot wildlife/birdlife in Aperture Priority mode. Learning where your functions lie within the menu and on the camera plus understanding the relationship between ISO, Shutter Speed, and F stops & reading the histogram are key ingredients in this level.

The class instruction includes: 3 lectures of 2.5 hours each with" hands on" in class instruction & possible outside shooting(weather permitting) plus a combined lecture and 4-5 hour field trip.

Minimum: 4 people, maximum 10 people at $95 each

DATE: February 23, 24 and March 2, 4
TIMES: THUR (both) , FRI -5:30-8pm; SAT 10-2pm

DEADLINE FOR SIGNING UP WITH THIS CLASS IS: MONDAY, FEBRUARY 20, 2017

Bird Photography Level II for DSLR cameras only

This class is for those with DSLR cameras who shoot in Manual or Aperture Priority & understand the relationship between ISO, Shutter Speed, and F stops. This workshop stresses how to get correct EXPOSURE and working with LIGHT QUALITY & your position to your subject.

The class instruction includes: 3 lectures of 2.5 hours each with" hands on" in class instruction & possible outside shooting (weather permitting) plus a combined lecture/field trip of 4-5 hours.

Minimum: 4 people, maximum 10 people at $95 each

DATE: MARCH 8, 9, 10, 11
TIMES: WED, THUR, FRI -5:30-8pm; SAT 10-2pm

DEADLINE FOR SIGNING UP WITH THIS CLASS IS: MONDAY, MARCH 6, 2017

When you sign up you MUST have your own camera & mention your camera "Brand" and the Model such as Canon T3i plus which lenses you have. NO POINT AND SHOOT CAMERAS ARE ALLOWED.

FOR YOUR CALENDAR: Wings Across the Big Sky

June 9-11, 2017 Great Falls, Montana

Time to begin making those summer plans! **Montana Audubon's** *Wings Across the Big Sky Festival***, co-hosted by Upper Missouri Breaks Audubon ,** will be held June 9-11, 2017 in Great Falls. We invite you to spread the news and enthusiasm so we can all enjoy a fantastic celebration of **40 Years of Montana Audubon**. Included in this year's activities are amazing field trips scheduled both Saturday and Sunday. These include excursions to the Rocky Mountain Front, Benton Lake, Kevin Rim, the Highwood and First Peoples State Park, among others, with the anticipation of seeing a varied array of species and habitats, as well as some education on surveys and conservation issues.

Festival headquarters will be located at the Best Western Heritage Inn.This venue will provide excellent opportunities to display our 40 years of history, Saturday afternoon presentations by Montana Audubon past and present programs, an outdoor barbeque to kickstart the anniversary celebration and this year's festival, our keynote speaker, and a Saturday evening banquet dinner.

Each month we will continue to feature developing news on the 2017 Bird Festival. Registration will begin in March. Stay tuned!

For more information contact Montana Audubon's Bird Festival Coordinator, Cathie Erickson: cerickson@mtaudubon.org.

Bird Notes

As you may remember, this past November was exceptionally warm, which kept all of the lakes and ponds from freezing until December. This was an opportunity to see some of our more common waterfowl for an extra two or three weeks, and maybe find some more uncommon ducks or loons.

There was a huge flight of sea ducks and loons across western Montana this past fall. In the southwestern corner this was limited to Surf Scoters, White-winged Scoters, and Pacific Loons, though Black Scoters and Red-throated Loons were reported further to the north and west. From Georgetown Lake in Deer Lodge Co. to Three Forks in Gallatin Co. at least **38 Surf Scoters** were seen, including and amazing high count of 21 at Silver Lake near Phillipsburg on 29 October. On November 10th, while I was enjoying a calm, sunny day in the fifties at Dailey Lake in Paradise Valley, **4 White-winged Scoters** landed on the lake. After long drinks of water, and some extensive preening the scoters began diving for crayfish. On November 29th after a stormy night, Drew Thate discovered **2 White-winged Scoters** on Glen Lake at the East Gallatin Recreation Area. This was the same storm that pushed a massive movement of **Snow Geese** out of Canada, and across the entire breadth of Montana. From the Bitterroot Valley to Glendive people who were outside the nights of November 27-28 were likely to witness the spectacle of hundreds if not thousands of Snow Geese flying overhead. At least 6 different **Pacific Loons** were found on local waters this fall, the latest being seen on Ennis Lake November 27th by Stephan Turner and Bob Martinka.

White-winged Scoter
-Arthur Morris/Vireo

A very late **American White Pelican** was floating on the Madison River near Three Forks December 11th. Ned Bixler said several cars were pulled over to watch this late season oddity.

The **Red-naped Sapsucker** that Vic Fesolowitz found near Ennis November 6th was a late record for this part of Montana, with only one later record east of the divide.

Black-throated Gray Warbler
-Glen Bartley

On December 2nd Tom Forwood found a **Spotted Towhee** at Lewis and Clark Caverns. Even more surprising was the **Vesper Sparrow** Andrew Guttenberg spotted north of the Belgrade airport November 30th, yet another lingering bird that is typically gone by October.

Though it was quite awhile ago by now, the **Black-throated Gray Warbler** Daryl Gustafson photographed in his Bozeman backyard October 13th is worth noting. This was only the twelfth time one has been documented in Montana.

-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

Sacajawea Audubon Society Officers and Committee Chairs

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Mailing Address

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 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/**

Sacajawea Audubon Society

Membership

____Basic Membership————$25

____Supporting Membership-——$50

Additional Donation of $_____

You may renew or join online on our website: http://www. http://sacajaweaaudubon.org/

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SAS does not share email addresses with anyone except Montana Audubon, so your address is safe with us.

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Sacajawea Audubon Society
Attn: Membership
P.O. Box 1711, Bozeman, MT 59771-1711

Montana Audubon: 406-443-3949; PO Box 595, Helena, MT 59624; mtaudubon@mtaudubon.org; www.mtaudubon.org For direct contact: norane@mtaudubon.org
Montana Bird Hotline: 406-721-9799 to report unusual or out-of-season birds

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