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

Nov 9	SAS Monthly Meeting
	Bird Sightings to John Parker
Nov 14	Start Project FeederWatch
Dec 3	SAS Book Club
Dec 11	MT Audubon Wildlife Grant Due

Fostering Young Naturalists!

Know any educators or youth leaders of children in grades 3 through 5? Please tell them that Sacajawea Audubon Society will provide free, nonfiction magazines for their students on a wide variety of nature topics from birds, of course, to wildlife migrations to ecosystems and more. For more information go online to audubonadventures.org or call Hilary Johnson, 599-1446.

The Birds of Yellowstone

Doug Smith, Senior Wildlife Biologist in Yellowstone National Park for the wolf, bird and elk programs

Monday Nov 9th, 2015 at 6:30pm
Hope Lutheran Church
2152 W. Graf Street in Bozeman

There are over 120 breeding birds in Yellowstone National Park (YNP)and many other migrants that pass through. The Yellowstone bird program monitors some of these species to detect population trends and direct conservation action. Doug's talk will highlight two different projects and the issues facing YNP areas songbirds, raptors (bald and golden eagles, osprey, peregrine falcons, red-tailed hawks and some owls), trumpeter swans, common loons and colonial nesting birds. In addition a new raptor migration route was recently discovered through Hayden Valley This and other aspects of the Yellowstone bird program will be explained.

Doug W. Smith is Yellowstone National Park's Senior Wildlife Biologist. He holds a PhD in Ecology, Evolution, and Conservation Biology from the University of Nevada at Reno. Smith has been with the Yellowstone Wolf Project from its beginning in 1994 and has led the park's Bird Program since 2008.

Skiing for Raptor Raffle winners will be drawn after the presentation. It's your last chance win one of two Bridger Bowl Season Passes All proceeds help us continue to conduct Bridger Raptor Study.

The program is free and open to the public. The social begins at 6:30 p.m. and the program starts at 7 p.m. at Hope Lutheran Church, 2152 West Graf (off of S. 19th).

Count Your Birds – Be a FeederWatcher

Project FeederWatch starts November 14th

If you feed birds you can help scientists by recording your birds in Project FeederWatch, a winter-long survey of birds that visit feeders. FeederWatch is very flexible and easy to participate in – you can count weekly or just a few times through the winter. The data helps to document changes occurring in bird winter ranges, eruptions of birds moving down from the north, and long term population trends. Recent statistics show that Cooper Hawks are on the increase, Yellow-rumped Warblers are becoming more common wintering in the Southeast, and Anna's Hummingbirds are moving their wintering range further north in the Northwest.

Sign up for the program or renew your account at www.feederwatch.org

Project FeederWatch is a joint project of the Cornell Lab of Ornithology and Bird Studies Canada.

Bird Notes

On September 23rd, Hobart Collins, Lou Ann Harris, and I went to Harrison Reservoir hoping to get a little snapshot of the fall migration. It turned out to be a day full of surprises, the first of which were the **6 Greater White-fronted Geese** that Lou Ann spotted right after we arrived at the lake. Not long after that I saw a lone duck across the lake that turned out to be an exceedingly early and unexpected **White-winged Scoter**. Also at Harrison that day were **33 White-faced Ibis**. The number of White-faced Ibis being seen in this part of Montana has dramatically increased over the last few years. Locally, as recently as five years ago it was notable to see anything more than a single ibis, and going back a couple of decades any sighting of a White-faced Ibis was considered to be quite unusual. With Glossy Ibis rapidly expanding their range across Colorado and into Wyoming, perhaps in the not to distant future we'll start to see another species of ibis more regularly in Montana.

On October 10th, while driving along Huffine Lane west of Bozeman, Robin Bennett saw 20 **Sandhill Cranes**. Later that morning, Robin was doubly excited to come across 94 more cranes near the intersection of Baxter and Harper Puckett, just three miles from her earlier sighting.

The rarest bird to turn up this past month was the immature male **Anna's Hummingbird** that appeared at Paulette Epple's feeder, in northeast Bozeman, October 12th. Anna's Hummingbird's range is typically restricted to the West Coast and the desert southwest, but they do occur nearly annually in Montana's western valleys, particularly during the late fall migration. Paulette speculated that this bird may have been pushed further to the east, by the strong west winds across the region the preceding two days before the hummingbird's appearance. Locally, there is one previous record of an Anna's Hummingbird, which visited Jean Perkins's feeder September 1-12, 1976. Coincidentally, these two observations while separated by nearly forty years occurred only about one mile from each other.

As Vickie Backus was hiking in the Tobacco Root Mountains October 11th, several flocks of rosy finches flew by. Finally, while on Mount Jefferson, a single finch landed close enough for Vickie to identify it as a **Black Rosy Finch**. This time of year while migrating, positive rosy finch identifications are tough because they always seem to be on the move.

-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

Bridger Raptor Festival Volunteer THANK YOU!

Sacajawea Audubon would like to give a big thank you to the 65 volunteers that helped at the Bridger Raptor Festival Oct. 2-4! The festival was another big success with an estimated 4,300 participants attending this year despite the rather cold, wet weather. Our volunteers staffed our educational activities (Build a Nifty Bird Box, Binocular Blitz, Sketch-A-Bird), our chapter table, greeted and directed visitors, and sold books and raffle tickets at the Friday night keynote by Kate Davis. Thanks to you all!

We would also like to thank our festival committee chair Leo Freeman, volunteer coordinator Sharon Hanton, and to Eddie & Jocelyn Allen and Loren Acton for putting together the 80 nest box kits!

Membership Application

Membership Benefits Include:

- National, State and Chapter Audubon membership
- 6 issues of ***Audubon*** magazine
- Monthly Sacajawea Audubon newsletter September through May
- Support of National & local Audubon conservation efforts

____ $20 Introductory membership
____ Additional donation $ _____*

***All additional donations go directly to your Sacajawea Audubon Chapter.**

Name: _____
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State: _____ Zip:_____
Email: _____

____ I will go green: Please send me the Sacajawea Audubon newsletter by E-mail only. (Add email address above.)

Mail your check and application to:
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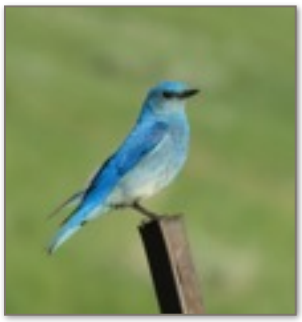
Attn: Membership
P.O Box 1711, Bozeman, MT
59771-1711 (C5ZN510Z)

I am interested in volunteering for:
____ Bird Surveys
____ Assist with educational activities
____ Invasive plant removal
____ Newsletter or website articles
____ Help with refreshments at meetings
____ Participate in chapter Birdathon

Mountain Bluebird Trail Summary 2015



The three monitored bluebird trails on Dry Creek/Pass Creek, Rocky Mountain Road and Sedan overall had a fairly productive year in 2015. A total of **486** mountain bluebirds fledged from these nest boxes. The Dry Creek/Pass Creek Trail is monitored by Janne Hayward. The Sedan Trail is monitored by Tove Hunter & Markie Nathan and Rocky Mountain Road is monitored by Lou Ann Harris. Monitors go out every two weeks to check the boxes from April through July. The Sedan Trail is made up of 80 boxes. 53 boxes are on the Dry Creek/Pass Creek Trail, and 48 boxes make up the Rocky Mountain Road Trail.

There were many highs and lows on the trails this season. The most heartbreaking was finding out from a local rancher that she had found up to 20 dead bluebirds along the Rocky Mtn. Road trail in March. They had been shot with a shotgun and there were many shotgun shells on the ground along with the dead birds. For all bird lovers, this was an unspeakable act. The good news is that the bluebirds seemed to rebound and by April 27th, we had 90% occupancy in the Rocky Mtn. Road boxes with lots of nests and eggs.

Janne and Lou Ann are licensed banders so they band bluebird nestlings and adult females throughout the spring and summer. The fun part of banding is finding several females return each year to nest in the same boxes, including some females that were banded as nestlings. Lou Ann had 12 recaptures of adult females and Janne had 4.

There is always a lot of drama out on the bluebird trail and this year was no exception. In June, we checked a box and found a female on warm eggs, but as Lou Ann removed the roof to look in, a portion of the back of the box fell in onto the female!. Some callous individual had used the box for target practice and shot out the back. Luckily, Janne had duct tape handy and Lou Ann was able to temporarily repair the box so the female bluebird could finish raising a family. We are happy to report that she successfully fledged 4 young.

The other highlight of the season was seeing a fledgling from a previous brood helping feed a nestling from a 2nd brood. There was just a single nestling in the box, but it was being fed by at least 3 bluebirds! Some of the other early fledglings were helping protect the nest as well.

If you love bluebirds and would like to help support the chapter's work on the bluebird trails, Sacajawea Audubon will be launching a new "Adopt A Bluebird Box" program starting next spring. Look for details to come in the February newsletter.

Montana Audubon Wildlife Grants Available Apply Today!

Are you working on a project benefiting non-game wildlife? Montana Audubon is offering small grants ($500 maximum/$1,600 total) for wildlife research and education projects through our Audubon Wildlife Fund of Montana endowment. Funds can be used for mileage, equipment, printing, and communications (but not salaries, stipends, and personal equipment).

To apply for a grant, visit http://mtaudubon.org/about/wildlife-grants/. Applications must be emailed (preferred) or postmarked by Friday, December 11, 2015. Grant recipients will be announced by February 1, 2016. For more information, contact Janet Ellis at jellis@mtaudubon.org.

SAS Book Group's Next Book:
Rosalie Edge: Hawk of Mercy, the Activist Who Saved Conservation from the Conservationists

It's time to start thinking about our next book, a biography of Rosalie Edge, described as "the first American woman to achieve national renown as a conservationist." Among her other accomplishments, she established the Hawk Mountain Sanctuary in Pennsylvania, the first preserve for birds of prey, and the Emergency Conservation Committee, described by the author Dyana Z. Furmansky, as the "most militant nature advocacy organization of its time."

We will discuss *Rosalie Edge, Hawk of Mercy*, on December 3, so it's not too early to plan your reading. If you want to attend the book group discussion and are not yet on the book group mailing list, please let us know. Adele Pittendrigh, 406-587-7710 adele.pittendrigh@gmail.com; Karin Jennings, 406-600-6563 karin.jennings@gmail.com; Karin Utzinger 406-586-1604, klutzinger@yahoo.com.

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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 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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Montana Bird Hotline: 406-721-9799 to report unusual or out-of-season birds

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