Sacajawea Audubon News

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

VIRTUAL PROGRAM Monday, February 8th, 2021:

"Birds of the Southern Ocean & Antarctica: The Gift of Wilderness" *with Marylou Blakeslee & Richard Kirchner, Naturalists*

Join us on a virtual trip to the Antarctic! It is our favorite place in the world, beautiful beyond imagination and inhospitable to our human frailties. It is a land full of fantastic creatures adapted to treacherous conditions. Yet Antarctica is so much more than that. It is a habitat; it is an ecosystem; it is the heart of the ocean and a place untrammeled by humankind.

We will journey from South America across the most dangerous seas in the world, the Drake Passage. Our journey will take us to the Island of South Georgia. Part of the habitat formed by the cold waters of the Antarctic Convergence, South Georgia is thick with wildlife, unique in every way. King Penguins in all stages of development walk amidst vehicle-sized Southern Elephant Seals and the frisky teeth of the South Georgian Fur Seal. Albatross with 8-foot wingspans circle overhead while the tiny South Georgian Pipit sings.

Then to "the ice." Icebergs tower in silence as we pass, telling a story of centuries past. Ripples on the surface of the water turn out to be hundreds of penguins returning to their nesting colonies for the arduous work of raising their young.

Researchers, explorers, and sailors came to this place to reach for something more, for themselves and for their countries. Today tourists, naturalists, and seafarers come to experience a parallel existence. They come for what Henry Beston described as "A world older and more complete than ours…" In this experience we learn, we realize, we wonder, and if we allow it, our hearts break open and we love.

Marylou Blakeslee is an artist and a naturalist. Her paintings are included in public and private collections both here and abroad. Her love for the wild world pulls her from the studio to expeditions in the world's naturally beautiful places where she has been sharing her knowledge and love with adventurers for over 25 years.

Rich Kirchner lives in Bozeman, Montana, where he has resided for the last forty-five years, following his love for the outdoors, the mountains, and the incredible array of wildlife that shares this magnificent place that he calls home. He has been a freelance photographer for forty plus years. His photos have been published in numerous books and magazines around the world. Photography for him is not only a business, but also a love-fulfilling passion!

If you would like to attend the Monday, February 8, 2021 Virtual Program, please register at: https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/6281794015857766415. Share our virtual program using hashtags #sasbirds and #BirdsoftheSouthernOcean.

SAS programs are free and open to the public. Our programs feature a special guest speaker the 2nd Monday of each month, September through May. ***Join us for a virtual social at 6:30 pm. Announcements and the program begin at 7:00 pm.*** *For more information on SAS Program Meetings contact Kyle Moon at programs@sacajaweaaudubon.org*

Above right: Black-browed Albatross. Photos courtesy Marylou Blakeslee & Richard Kirchner.

GET *your* 2021 SAS CALENDAR —*but you'd better* HURRY!

WOW! the 2021 SAS Calendars are going FAST! Be reminded of important SAS dates and events, enjoy quotes about birds and by birders, and decorate your home or office with 12 months of stunning images of birds of the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem by Sacajawea Audubon Society's own Forrest Roland and Kyle Moon.

You can order the calendar for $25 either online at https://sacajaweaaudubon.org/get-your-2021-sacajawea-audubon-calendar/ or when renewing your membership (see back page).

You also have the option of picking up your calendar at **Wild Birds Unlimited** here in Bozeman. It saves SAS considerable postage expenses. Just order online or drop a check into the mail, and pick up your calendar at the store. If you haven't purchased your calendar before entering the store, you can use your phone while in the store to make your purchase directly from our SAS website. You would not be able to pay for the calendar along with any other purchases you may choose to make from Wild Birds Unlimited.

Get—or gift—your calendar today!

SACAJAWEA AUDUBON SOCIETY OFFICERS AND COMMITTEE CHAIRS

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The Winter Streams of Western Bozeman

By Travis Kidd, SAS Board Member

Every year that I participate in a Christmas Bird Count, I keep a running tally of the target species for the territory I cover, and the tiny pockets of habitat in which I hope to find those species.

One highlight bird for me is the **Green-winged Teal.** It is not an uncommon bird in Montana but it is one of many birds that rely on shallow running water to overwinter in Bozeman. This means, to find them, you end up walking along streams, ditches, and marshy wet areas on the borders of subdivisions and people's back yards. The territory I work for the Bozeman CBC is a massive sprawl of "in-town" Bozeman, coordinated by route leader Andrew Guttenberg. To cover this territory, we plan our path, zig-zagging through town, with a tight schedule to make sure we cover all the ground we need to.

Green-winged Teal territory is always explored in the second half of the day, which means it is occasionally a species that we are at risk of missing. To find them, Andrew will often drop me off at the intersection of a road on the west side of town and a shallow stream choked with willows and dogwood. I then slog through the snow and brush toward the next intersecting road where he will pick me up, all the while, hoping to find our elusive Green-winged Teal as well as Wilson's Snipe, the rare overwintering Red-winged Blackbird, Song Sparrows, Ring-necked Pheasants, Mallards, and other overwintering wetland birds.

These shallow trickling streams and ponds that cut through the ever expanding neighborhoods of western Bozeman are essential winter habitat for important Montana birds. As Bozeman continues to grow, it is imperative that we protect these critical wetlands before these species disappear from Bozeman's winter landscape.

Today, I went scouting those streams looking for Wilson's Snipe. I came up empty on snipe but I did find six Green-winged Teal on a mostly frozen pond with Bozeman's Chief Joseph Middle School in the background.

Green-winged Teal photo by Travis Kidd.

BIRD NOTES

by John Parker

The Christmas Bird Counts had to be conducted differently this year due to social distancing constraints. Some of the counts restricted the number of participants; other counts could be run with the usual number of people; but all of the counts were affected in some way (including smaller walking groups, or "pods"). The biggest change due to the pandemic were the restrictions on social gatherings, which meant no pre- or post-count gatherings. We all missed the comradery of the after-count gatherings to share stories about our day in the field.

All of the counts had mild weather conditions and little snow cover with two exceptions. Livingston once again had extremely high winds to deal with on count day, and not unexpectedly, West Yellowstone had nearly normal snow cover.

One commonality for all of this area's Christmas counts were the low numbers of raptors, with the exception of **Bald and Golden Eagles**. For example, the **Rough-legged Hawk** totals for Three Forks and Bozeman in 2019 were 129 and 96 respectively, and in 2020 both counts recorded 14 birds. For **Red-tailed Hawks** the 2019 numbers for the Three Forks and Bozeman counts were 52 and 129, compared to 12 and 19 birds on the 2020 count.

The sixty Bozeman counters tallied a record high species total of 78, increasing the total by five species. Besides the inaugural Bozeman count in 1908, only three other years (1961, 1963, and 2012) had a larger increase in the species total. The rarest bird of the day and newest addition to the Bozeman count was a **White-winged Dove**, which is also a first for any Montana count. What really pushed the species total up were the wide variety of waterfowl. **Tundra Swan**, **Bufflehead**, and **Hooded Merganser** were recorded for only the second time; **Ring-necked Duck** for the third time; **Northern Pintail**, **Redhead**, and **Virginia Rail** for the fourth time. Six different waterfowl set new record high numbers, along with new high totals for **American Crow**, **Common Raven**, and 1,511 **Black-billed Magpies**, which is a continental high. An amazing record of 374 **Cedar Waxwings** were seen on count day.

Participation on the Ennis count was reduced to section leaders, so more feeder watchers were encouraged to participate. The 13 field observers and seven feeder watchers tallied a respectable 59 species. One new species was added this year, a **Long-eared Owl** discovered on the Trail Creek trail out of Bear Trap Canyon. There were high counts for **Ring-necked Duck** and **Northern Flicker**. The only species that have been observed on all 61 counts are **Mallard**, **Common Goldeneye**, **Bald Eagle**, **Black-billed Magpie**, **Black-capped Chickadee** and **House Sparrow**. No waxwings were observed and notably absent again this year were any falcons.

Cedar Waxwing by Mick Thompson.

Even with the high winds (up to 70 mph), the counters on the Livingston count still managed to find 54 different species of birds within the count circle. New to the Livingston count was a **Varied Thrush**. One of the more exciting finds of the day were the nine **Sharp-tailed Grouse**.

The Three Forks count was blessed with blue skies and no wind, for the 25 field counters to enjoy. With zero snow cover the birds may have been widely dispersed, but the participants were able to find 62 species over the course of the day. No new species this year, but a **Sandhill Crane** was seen for the third time, and an **American Dipper** and **Swamp Sparrow** were found for only the second time on the count.

Long-eared Owl by Mick Thompson.

Fewer people participated in the Gardiner count due to Covid-19 restrictions but a core group still found 39 species, which is five above the average for the count. A single cygnet **Trumpeter Swan** was found on the Gardner River below Mammoth Hot Springs, for a count first. A thrilling total of 13 **Golden Eagles** were observed, for a new count high. Other new count highs included 52 **Eurasian Collared-Doves** and four **Common Grackles**.

The eight counters on the West Yellowstone count enjoyed a crisp, sunny winter day. There were 17 species of birds spotted during the day. One of the most successful groups of the day were the cross-country skiers who were able to access open water along the Madison River and the northeast shore of Hebgen Lake. They found six species of waterfowl, including 31 **Trumpeter Swans** and two **Northern Pintail**.

The Ruby Valley count is the newest count in southwest Montana, and continues to add new species at a steady clip. New to the count this year were **Cackling Goose**, **Pine Siskin**, and **Western Meadowlark**. The 69 species seen on the count was a new high for total species, and 18 of those birds had new record high counts. Interestingly, **Northern Goshawks** have been seen on all six of the Ruby Valley counts.

Feeder watchers always add some interesting birds, and this year was especially fruitful at the feeders. The **White-winged Dove** and **Canada Jays** in Bozeman, the **Varied Thrush** in Livingston, and **Harris's Sparrows** in both Bozeman and Ennis were all added to the counts by feeder watchers.

Help Save Birds from Window Collisions!

Join us as Sacajawea Audubon develops a new program to save birds' lives by preventing bird collisions with glass windows. Glass collisions are a leading threat to birds. Birds see the world differently than people. A window's reflection can look like good habitat they can fly right through, not as a transparent and dangerous barrier. According to the Smithsonian, a staggering one-billion birds are killed each year by collisions with glass.

We are putting together a team to help with this project and we invite you to join us and get involved. SAS already has several highly successful on-going conservation programs that focus directly on the welfare and safety of birds, including our Eradicate Burdock and Bird-Friendly Landscaping initiatives. Members who participate in these projects work together in teams to reduce threats and create good habitat for birds. Participating in these programs helps birds and is fun and rewarding for team members.

Photo by Ecological Research as Education Network (EREN).

This new initiative—to prevent bird-window strikes—is an opportunity to join a team and make a difference for birds. Send your name and email address to Adele Pittendrigh (adelep@sacajaweaaudubon.org) or Paulette Epple (conservation@sacajaweaaudubon.org). We will arrange a virtual meeting for late February to brainstorm ideas for how we can work to prevent window strikes and make our communities safer for birds. Check out the American Bird Conservatory site Glass Collisions: Preventing Bird Window Strikes | ABC (abcbirds.org) to learn how other organizations around the country are dealing with this issue.

SACAJAWEA AUDUBON SOCIETY

INDRELAND AUDUBON WETLAND PRESERVE UPDATE: FEB. 2021

by Chris Nixon, SAS President

Our excitement builds as the design continues. Rich McEldowney and Confluence Inc. have provided the 70% design updates for the Indreland Audubon Wetland Preserve (IAWP) to our Wetland Preservation Project (WPP) committee. The design has been reviewed by the committee and will go before the SAS board this month for full board review. The 100% design will be forthcoming in the next couple of months.

SAS will be contracting with local experts of Montana Aquatic Resource Services (MARS) to navigate all the permits and regulations for establishing the majority of the IAWP as a wetland mitigation bank. This wetland mitigation bank lies adjacent to the already existing I-90 East Bozeman Wetland Mitigation Bank that was created by the Montana Department of Transportation (MDT) in 2009. The MDT mitigation site serves only the needs for wetland impacts related to MDT projects in the area. The IAWP site will be available for wetland impacts generated by entities other than MDT. Of course, the preferred action is to not impact wetlands at all, but rather preserve and enhance their functions onsite whenever possible.

The high profile of the IAWP, spearheaded by SAS working with numerous other local organizations, has helped bring the importance of our area wetlands back to the forefront. The City of Bozeman has now moved wetlands up to a top tier priority. City Staff will update the inventory on wetlands within the City limits/growth boundary and update the critical lands study. You can view the latest status on actions and plans by the City of Bozeman in the City's Strategic Plan Priorities report of January 12, 2021 by City Manager Jeff Mihelich.

Combining the interest and determination of SAS, the Greater Gallatin Watershed Council (GGWC), Trout Unlimited (TU), Ducks Unlimited (DU), MARS, Gallatin Valley Land Trust (GVLT), and other organizations to protect our remaining wetlands, with the renewed priority of wetlands by the Bozeman City Commission, gives us renewed hope for our local wetlands. However, consider yourself and your voice as key in this matter. YOU are SAS. YOU are quite possibly GGWC, TU, DU, GVLT. And YOU are definitely BOZEMAN. We encourage you to express your concerns and interest in wetlands to your local officials. Give of your resources when possible, be they financial or volunteer hours. Help preserve our wetlands and promote the ever increasing need to keep water on and 'in the land'.*

**In addition to honoring the family of Ileana Indreland, a major land donor to IAWP, the word "Indreland" means "in the land" in Norwegian.*

Photo by Amy Kelley Hoitsma.

Wetlands and Water: The Facts

We are in a growing water crisis that threatens people and our planet. We use more water than nature can replenish, and are destroying the ecosystem that water and all life depend on most - Wetlands.

Five solutions

We could have enough water for nature and us if we:

- Stop destroying, start restoring wetlands
- Don't dam rivers or over extract from aquifers
- Address pollution, clean up freshwater sources
- Increase water efficiency, use wetlands wisely
- Integrate water and wetlands into development plans and resource management

What wetlands do

Fresh and saltwater wetlands sustain humanity and nature. They support our social and economic development through multiple services:

Store and clean water

- Wetlands hold and provide most of our fresh water.
- They naturally filter pollutants, leaving water we can safely drink.

Keep us fed

- Aquaculture is the fastest growing food production sector, while inland fisheries alone provided **12 million** tonnes of fish in 2018.
- Rice paddies feed **3.5 billion** people annually.

Underpin our global economy

- Wetlands, the most valuable ecosystem, provide services worth **US $47 trillion** a year.
- More than **one billion** people rely on wetlands for income.

Provide nature a home

- **40%** of the world's species live and breed in wetlands. Annually, about **200 new fish** species discovered in freshwater wetlands.
- Coral reefs are home to **25%** of all species.

Keep us safe

- Wetlands provide protection from floods and storms with each acre of wetland absorbing up to **1.5 million** gallons of floodwater.
- Wetlands help regulate the climate: peatlands store twice as much carbon as forests, with saltmarshes, mangroves and seagrass beds also holding vast amounts of carbon.

Water crisis

Population growth, urbanization and consumption patterns have put unbearable pressure on wetlands and the water in them:

- Almost all global freshwater sources are compromised with **82%** of the world's population exposed to high levels of pollution in their water supply.
- **2.2 billion people** don't have safe drinking water with an annual economic cost amounting to **$260 billion**.
- Water equivalent to the annual flow of the Volga River, Europe's longest river, is squandered in **1.3 billion tons** of food wasted from farm to fork each year.
- Water insecurity was a key factor in conflict in at least **45 countries** in 2017.
- **14%** more water is needed to produce **70%** more food by 2050 for **10 billion people**.

Wetland loss impact

Our water consumption means less water for nature. Wetland loss and pollution has intensified a water crisis threatening all life:

- Nearly **90%** of the world's wetlands lost since 1700s, those remaining are disappearing three times faster than forests.
- **25%** of all wetland species and 1 in 3 freshwater species face extinction.
- Climate change is reducing surface and groundwater in already dry regions, resulting in increasing competition for water.

Revised from www.worldwetlandsday.org **factsheet, promoting WORLD WETLANDS DAY, February 2, 2021.**

Paulette Epple Receives Cox Conserves Heroes Award

Sacajawea Audubon Society is proud to announce that our Conservation Chair Paulette Epple is the recipient of a Cox Conserves Heroes award for her work at Story Mill Community Park. This award was given for her leadership in our partnership with the Trust for Public Land.

From Story Mill Community Park's earliest beginnings, Paulette was involved with engaging our membership to publicly support the creation of the park. She was then tapped by Trust for Public Land director Maddy Pope to give input on the trail system through the Nature Preserve, and greatly influenced the trail network design that we so enjoy today. Paulette also provided critical input on the preserve signage, and the bird blind. Before the park was officially open, Paulette organized and led many bird walks to introduce the community to this future gem. She installed several nest boxes to entice Tree Swallows, Black-capped Chickadees and House Wrens to take up residence, and to give visitors an up-close look at nesting songbirds.

More recently, Paulette oversaw the creation of a bird-feeding station at the bird blind. Working with partner GCC Trident, a feeding pole was manufactured and installed. She then set up a system to have SAS volunteers maintain and fill the feeders throughout the year. The feeding station has become a focal point in the park and is visited by many people, including school kids, families, photographers and birders.

The last project Paulette created was during the 2020 pandemic year. Sacajawea Audubon was given a section of the Story Mill Park Learning Garden to plant as a bird-friendly demonstration garden. This really fell into Paulette's background as a professional landscaper. She enlisted help from landscape architect Linda Iverson to create a plan. Then she gathered the 99 plants of 35 species and organized several socially distanced work parties to prepare the ground and put in the plants and irrigation system. Of course, it turned out beautifully! The final touch will be installing new garden and plant signage come spring.

Paulette Eppel works in the Story Mill Community Park garden. Photo by Lou Ann Harris.

All of these projects were possible due to the hundreds of hours put in by our dedicated and enthusiastic volunteers as they led bird walks, pulled weeds, filled bird feeders, and planted shrubs. This Cox Conserves Heroes Award comes with a $5,000 prize, which Paulette has donated back to Sacajawea Audubon.

Thank you, Paulette, for your dedication and hard work on behalf of the birds. ***Congratulations***!

In Memory of Jeff Safford

We are very sad at the passing of our longtime member Jeff Safford. Jeff was a regular fixture at monthly meetings with his wife, June. Always in the front row, Jeff would look forward to the recent bird sightings portion of the meeting, and often added his own sightings. Jeff held the chapter record for most Christmas Bird Counts attended, starting in the early 1970s. Jeff also served on the SAS Board of Directors from 2012-2015.

He will be missed by all who knew him. Happy birding in heaven, Jeff.

WHY I AM A MEMBER OF SACAJAWEA AUDUBON SOCIETY

I've always had a fascination for wildlife and the outdoors ever since I was a little kid.

Even though I grew up in Orlando, I knew where to find wildlife and I would visit those areas often. A five-minute bike ride from my house led me to Shingle Creek—the headwaters of the Everglades—where I fished regularly. Fishing wasn't the only thing that had me coming back; it was the great blue heron also fishing, the flock of turkeys emerging from the floodplain forest, the water moccasin coiled up at the water's edge, the river otter proving who was a better fisherman, the gator basking on the bank, and so much more. I was so intrigued by nature I pursued a degree in wildlife ecology and conservation from the University of Florida.

Since graduating I've worked conservation jobs ranging from Florida to Guyana, including Alaska and Montana, which I now call home. After spending the last two summers fighting fire and working as a fisheries observer in the winters, I've decided to move to Bozeman with my partner Lindsay in search of a permanent career where I can grow and establish roots.

I joined the Sacajawea Audubon Society for many reasons, but I'm most excited about being a part of our community through conservation. Soon after joining, I was teaming up with the Weed Warriors pulling burdock from our natural areas in town. I'm still very new to Bozeman and SAS, but I am enthralled to be part of an organization that is moving in the right direction.

I am thankful to be surrounded by all the zealous members of this organization and for them guiding me to be where I am today. As your Program Chair and an active member, I know there is a lot coming up over the horizon and I couldn't be happier to tag along on this journey as we advance in fulfilling our mission to build on an interest in birds to promote the conservation of our natural environment through enjoyment, education and action." *~ Kyle Moon*

Some years ago I discovered the Audubon Society which had great annual celebrations. I traveled all over the state to attend them. I signed up for field trips and educational classes. This opened up a new world to me. To my surprise, I found the Sacajawea Audubon Society was located in Bozeman. I went to a meeting and discovered I knew some people. Loreene Reed was one of them. I told her I would like to be on the Board. A fews months later, she asked me if I would like to fill a vacant place on the Board. This pleased me because I could give back to the organization. The Board offered tremendous learning experience about birds, the environment and of course about politics. The Board was active and I found lots with which to get involved. I learned a few things about myself too. I learned that I love to find volunteers, to manage the hospitality table, and generally visit with everyone. The Board then appointed me to chair the Nomination Committee. This gave me the chance to look more closely at the membership and find leadership. What a great opportunity.

After four years on the board, I resigned because of health reasons. I am now well and have recently been asked to take over the Nomination Committee again. How lucky am I !! I feel fortunate to be back in the mix.

I have had many opportunities in my adult life. Being married, having children, being a licensed clinical social worker, having a counseling business and being a part of Sacajawea Audubon Society again. I will be back in the fun of it. There are lots more birds to identify and members to meet. Maybe I'll see you!

~ Sharon Hanton

Great Backyard Bird Count Feb. 12–15, 2021

The Great Backyard Bird Count (GBBC) is a free, fun, and easy event that engages bird watchers of all ages in counting birds to create a real-time snapshot of bird populations. Participants are asked to count birds for as little as 15 minutes on one or more days of the four-day event and report their sightings at birdcount.org. Anyone can take part in the Great Backyard Bird Count, and you can participate from your backyard or anywhere in the world.

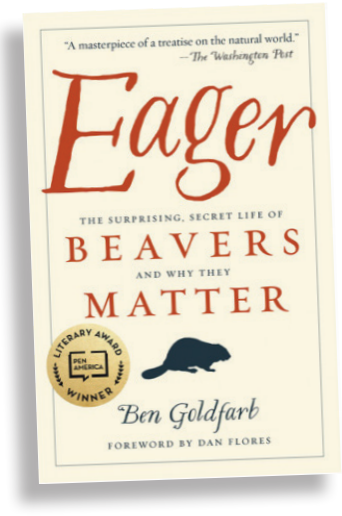
Each checklist submitted during the GBBC helps researchers at the Cornell Lab of Ornithology and the National Audubon Society learn more about how birds are doing. Last year, more than 268,000 participants from 194 countries submitted their bird observations online, creating the largest instantaneous snapshot of global bird populations ever recorded.

On the website participants can explore real-time maps and charts that show what others are reporting during and after the count. Check out the "Explore a Region" tool to get an idea of what you can expect to see in your area during the next GBBC. For more information, go to www.birdcount.org

SAS FEBRUARY 2021 BOOK CLUB

Warm Greetings!

The February SAS Book Club selection is: *Eager: The Surprising, Secret Life of Beavers and Why They Matter* by Ben Goldfarb.



It is a timely and very relevant work for any community that is concerned about the importance of keystone species like beavers, which secure the success of all interdependent species from birds to blue darners!

DATE: Wednesday, February 17, 2021. TIME: 6:30-7:15 pm. ONLINE ONLY. Please contact Elisabeth Swanson if you want to join: Elsswa@gmail.com or 406-507-8325.

Below is a recommendation from Chris Nixon with a link to a video documenting one community's efforts to protect beavers!

"Thought you all may enjoy how everyday citizens with no former knowledge or understanding of beavers rallied around new beaver residents in Alhambra Creek (the creek flowing through their downtown in Martinez, California) and how they have created a movement in support of beavers and the wetlands they create. It is a pretty amazing story. This is the type of occurrence that really changes people and their community—for the better.

"The book *Eager: The Surprising, Secret Life of Beavers and Why They Matter* by Ben Goldfarb is mentioned near the very end of the video. This book happens to be the SAS Book Club selection for the February 2021 Virtual Book Club meeting. I am about halfway through the book and have been blown away since the introduction by Dan Flores and the first chapter. I encourage you all to read this book—and soon. There is such a wealth of information in this book that can be of great value to our wetland conservation and restoration efforts here in Bozeman, as well as for all of North America and northern Eurasia. You can find the video on YouTube at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zJ-9aQDK77U

"I hope you enjoy the video and.....happy reading!"

~ Chris Nixon, SAS President

Plants for Birds:
Common Elderberry
(American Elderberry, Black Elderberry)

- **Scientific Name:** *Sambucus canadensis* (Caprifoliaceae family)
- **Height:** 6 to 12 ft.
- **Hardiness:** Zone 3
- **Wildlife Value:** Important for cover and nesting sites. Berries provide food for wildlife and blossoms attract pollinators.

Common elderberry is a wonderful Montana native plant guaranteed to attract birds to your yard. This large deciduous shrub produces showy clusters of white blossoms in the spring and juicy, dark purplish-black berries in late summer, giving color and texture to the garden. This plant has a long history of culinary, nutritional, and medicinal uses for humans but also has very important uses for wildlife. The thick branches provide cover and nesting sites for birds while the showy flowers provide nectar for bees, butterflies, and even hummingbirds. The prolific berries are enjoyed by wildlife of all types, from chipmunks to Black Bears and a wide variety of birds including thrushes, Warbling Vireos, Western Tanagers, towhees, woodpeckers, grosbeaks, and many more!

This versatile native can be found in forests, woodlands, thickets, riparian sites, ravines and roadsides in valleys to subalpine sites.

Native Americans have been using this elderberry plant for thousands of years. Today berries are used in pies, wines, cobblers, jelly, candy, sauces and syrups. The flowers are used in flavorful teas, cordials, floral waters, tonics, fritters and ointments. The berries are known to have many health benefits being high in anti-oxidants and aiding the immune system. The *Wall Street Journal* mentioned them in an article with seven other berries as being our "nutritional royalty."

Sambucus canadensis is an upright, fast growing, spreading shrub that grows from 6 to 12 feet high. Due to its size and sprawling nature, it is best used in backyard hedges, mixed shrub borders, and screens rather than in a home foundation planting. It does best in moist, well-drained sites in sun or partial shade. It's a hardy, cold-tolerant plant that can live up to 60 years and, once established, can produce massive amounts of fruit. Another species, the Red Elderberry (*Sambucus racemosa*) is also native to Montana but is less commonly planted and the red berries can be toxic unless cooked.

Plant this native where it has room to grow and watch the birds flock in to feast on the berries.

~ Leslie Eddington

Above: Common Elderberry flowers and fruit.

Sacajawea Audubon Society
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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.

Deadline for article submission is the 15th of the month preceding the month the articles will appear. Send articles electronically to 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 2021

Individual or Family
January -December 2021

☐ ***YES!*** I have included $25 for my **2021 SACAJAWEA AUDUBON CALENDAR**

☐ Basic Membership $25

☐ Supporting Membership $50
(Supporting local conservation & education projects)

☐ Thank You for Considering an Additional Donation .....$_____

- ☐ *Bridger Raptor Study*
- ☐ *Education Projects*
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❖ Sacajawea Audubon Newsletter is sent by email. ☐ *I would like a paper newsletter mailed to me.*

❖ We do not share your information except with National Audubon, so your contact information is safe with us. Please check this box ☐ if you do not want your information shared with the National Audubon Society.

☐ ***YES!*** I have included another $20 to join National Audubon Society

Mail this form and 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!

02/21 Newsletter