OCTOBER 2023

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.

SAS Monthly Program: Monday, October 9th, Hope Lutheran Church

"Golden Eagles, Wolverine, and Lynx: Non-invasive methods of monitoring Montana's rare and elusive carnivores"

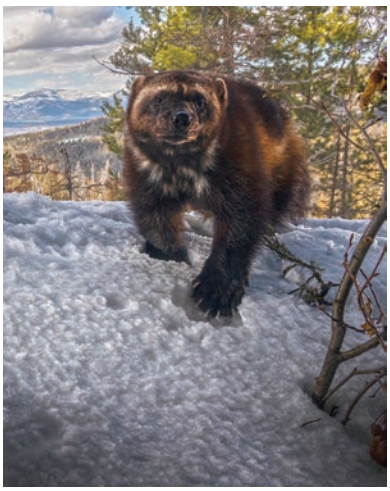
an update from Kalon Baughan and Bret Davis

Kalon Baughan (left) n and Bret Davis

Kalon and Bret met on the Bridger Ridge Hawk Watch in 2012 and became instant friends. They spent two seasons together counting migrating Golden Eagles. Since then, they have fostered a relationship geared toward wildlife conservation with a special focus on non-invasive methods of monitoring rare and elusive carnivores.

Now they have teamed up again, forming their own company—Wild Ideas, LLC. This time the animals of focus are wolverine and lynx, two of Montana's most threatened and iconic species. Their talk will discuss the novel ways they identify and monitor individual wolverine and lynx with photographs. Three years of work in the mountains along the Continental Divide in central Montana have given them a unique view into the world of these wild creatures, which they are excited to share with you. The animals' natural life histories, camera trap photographs (both with traditional game cameras and professional DSLR equipment), and perspectives on current issues in conservation and preservation of Montana's wild ecosystems will be presented.

Kalon lives in his cabin outside Helmville, Montana along the shore of Nevada Creek Reservoir. He works as a professional artist and photographer. On the side, he has dedicated the past 12 years to wildlife conservation, developing non-invasive methods that integrates trail camera technology for the use of monitoring rare forest carnivores.



Wolverine photo by Kalon Baughan.

Bret currently works in Bozeman as a research scientist in a physics laboratory. He has worked on numerous conservation projects—primarily with birds—throughout the state of Montana and from the Upper Peninsula of Michigan to the wild woods of Alaska.

The in-person meeting will be held Monday, October 9th, at Hope Lutheran Church, 2152 West Graf (off S. 19th). A social and the live broadcast begins at 6:30 PM; announcements follow at 7:00 PM; the program begins at 7:15 PM. Attendees are encouraged to bring their own reusable cups.

For virtual attendance please register at https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/3379718857806030165. After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the webinar.

Attendees—whether in person or virtual—are encouraged to share their bird sightings at this and every monthly program. Share the program on social media using the hashtags #sasbirds, #sacaaudubon, #conservation, #wolverine, and #lynx.

SAS monthly programs are free and open to the public, featuring a special guest speaker the 2nd Monday of each month, September through May. For more information, contact Ken Sinay at programs@sacajaweaaudubon.org.

MESSAGE *from* SAS PRESIDENT, CHRIS NIXON

One of the things I enjoy about birding is seeing all the smiling faces of birders when we encounter each other at birding hotspots, on trails, during birding trips and events, and at membership meetings. Upon these encounters you know you are among others who not only share a similar interest, but others that share your strong passion for birds and nature. There is no better opportunity to meet others with your same level of passion than at the monthly Sacajawea Audubon Society (SAS) membership meetings.

There were 46 passionate people present at last month's presentation and another 30+ who joined in virtually. Ken Sinay did a great job leading the meeting as our new Programs Committee Chair. Rebecca Himsl surprised us and was/is able to help out with our first two meetings of the season, even though she has officially stepped down as Chair of the Hospitality Committee. I think she enjoys the smiling faces, too.

SAS is in need of someone to fill the position of Hospitality Chair, as Rebecca will only be able to help for the month of October. Her situation will not allow her to continue the rest of the season. The October meeting would be a great opportunity for her to show someone else the ropes.

The Hospitality Chair arrives early to assess the room and help rearrange tables and chairs and prepare coffee and hot water for tea (provided by SAS), and has things looking nice when others arrive. The coffee makers are already in place at the church.

Traditionally, the Hospitality Chair contacts and arranges for half a dozen or so members to bring and provide treats each month for the membership meeting. Rebecca went above and beyond in making and bringing treats—that's Rebecca (so you can blame her if your weight went up last year)! But there are always birders who have a fondness for sharing sweets as well as tweets.

Our annual membership meeting in May is traditionally a sweet and savory pot luck. So just about everyone pitches in and shares their favorite dishes—more smiles!

If you enjoy a room full of smiling faces, please consider stepping up as our next Hospitality Chairperson. If you and your significant other would like to jointly take on this role, that would be a plus! This would be something meaningful and rewarding to do together in providing a service to others.

Is yours the smiling face of our new SAS Hospitality Chair? Please reach out to me. I would love to chat with you!

SACAJAWEA AUDUBON SOCIETY OFFICERS AND COMMITTEE CHAIRS

Officers

President	Chris Nixon pres@sacajaweaaudubon.org
Vice President	John Edwards vicepres@sacajaweaaudubon.org
Treasurer (acting)	Loreene Reid treas@sacajaweaaudubon.org
Secretary	Emma Narotzky sec@sacajaweaaudubon.org

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Boardroom Bobcat member Jack Evans	boardroombobcat@sacajaweaaudubon.org

Activity Leaders

Education Chair	**Looking for Volunteer** education@sacajaweaaudubon.org
Conservation Co-Chairs	Paulette Epple conservation@sacajaweaaudubon.org Lou Ann Harris louann@sacajaweaaudubon.org
Field Trips, Bird Sightings	John Parker birdsightings@sacajaweaaudubon.org
Hospitality	**Looking for Volunteer** hospitality@sacajaweaaudubon.org
Membership	Loreene Reid membership@sacajaweaaudubon.org
Newsletter	Terri Narotzky newsletter@sacajaweaaudubon.org
Programs	Ken Sinay programs@sacajaweaaudubon.org
Website	Lou Ann Harris webmaster@sacajaweaaudubon.org
Social Media/ Communications	Lou Ann Harris socialmedia@sacajaweaaudubon.org
Wetlands Preservation	Loreene Reid wetlands@sacajaweaaudubon.org
IAWP/Busy Beavers Stewardship Coordinator	Emma Narotzky wetlands@sacajaweaaudubon.org
Book Club	Elisabeth Swanson & Hilary Johnson bookclub@sacajaweaaudubon.org
Newsletter Design	Amy Kelley Hoitsma aok@mcn.net

SACAJAWEA AUDUBON SOCIETY

INDRELAND AUDUBON WETLAND PRESERVE UPDATE: OCT. 2023

THE WETLAND PRESERVATION PROJECT (WPP) was initiated to accomplish Sacajawea Audubon Society's mission to protect and restore increasingly rare wetland and riparian habitats in our region, and to provide educational opportunities and enjoyment for generations to come. The IAWP is the first of our wetland protection projects.

IAWP Busy Beavers Update

Story and photos by Emma Narotzky

Fortunate with all the incredibly beautiful weather this season, IAWP Busy Beavers volunteered at a work party to wrap trees, clear the culvert, cut thistle heads, and get a head start on the burdock. Thanks to Jennifer Abbott, Carla Grier, David Grier, Dawn Inman, Frank Marchak, Doug McSpadden, Jenny Minter, Colleen Moore, Sean Peters, Loreene Reid, and Cathy Stamm for all their efforts.

In appreciation for their dedicated efforts at the wetland, Steve Hoffman's raptor ID class was offered free to all the Busy Beavers (hint, hint: there are more and more perks that come with being a Busy Beaver!). Many of us Busy Beavers and others then gathered at Bridger Bowl the next morning to meet this year's official raptor counters at a special kickoff breakfast for the Bridger Raptor Count.

Raptor workshop in the Gravelly Mountains with Steve Hoffman.

Busy Beavers also enjoyed a discount for Ashley Martens' fall birding series, where participants learned about fall migration patterns, observed pre-migratory behavior, and identified those challenging fall warblers along trails around Bozeman.

During the annual Gallatin Watershed Cleanup, organized by Gallatin Watershed Council (GWC), six volunteers from the community removed trash from the IAWP. This is a huge help as the wind is forever blowing things in. There will always be help needed in keeping the IAWP tidy and litter free.

Kids with MOSS learned about lady bugs and more at the IAWP.

SAS has long desired to collaborate with the Montana Outdoor Science School (MOSS), and is happy to announce that this has finally happened. MOSS recently led their first preschool walk at the IAWP. The curious young explorers examined beaver-chewed logs, ladybugs, dragonflies, and aquatic plants; learned about the abundant resources for migrating birds at the IAWP, such as chokecherries and a myriad of insects; read about another wetland restoration; and met MOSS's own adorable ambassador garter snake named Taco. We look forward to three more MOSS field trips that will visit the IAWP this fall. The long-anticipated collaboration with MOSS is well underway and we couldn't be more pleased.

(continued on page 4)

SACAJAWEA AUDUBON SOCIETY

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Jenny Minter, Cathy Stamm, Loreene Reid, and Dawn Inman cut thistle at the IAWP.

This season's **water monitoring** concluded at the end of September. Thanks to all those that waded into the waters of the IAWP to continue adding to our knowledge of the hydrology of the area!

Ongoing data collection for 2023 includes **avian point counts** through October—and of course you can contribute to our knowledge of birds utilizing the IAWP by uploading your observations to eBird every time you go out to enjoy the IAWP.

Cringe! Wildlife road mortality is unfortunately a big problem at the IAWP as the preserve is split by I-90. We will soon start conducting **road mortality surveys**, which will continue year-round. Do you want to help collect this gruesome data? Good news: The Montana Department of Transportation will be installing **new wildlife fencing** and **wildlife jump-outs** in east Bozeman, including through the IAWP. So we hope to be able to document the benefits that this style fencing provides to wildlife in the immediate area.

All you bat lovers will be glad to know that two **bat boxes** have been donated to the IAWP: one from Kevin Cox and one from Cathie Norton. Both were built by Asa and Enzo Norton, with the help of their grandpa. Busy Beavers need help painting, caulking, and installing the boxes this fall. Contact wetlands@sacajaweaaudubon.org if you'd like to help.

Please be Bear Aware! Bears are frequenting the wetland, gorging on chokecherries before they sleep all winter! So make certain to survey your surroundings and know that bears like chokecherries more than most of us do. Volunteers are encouraged to bring bear spray while helping out at the IAWP at this time of year.

Prepare for next season's water monitoring and other IAWP activities. **Sign up to become a Busy Beaver** and be notified of volunteer opportunities, training, and events. Visit https://tinyurl.com/iawpbusybeavers

If you have questions about the Busy Beavers or wetland events, please email wetlands@sacajaweaaudubon.org.

Exciting Upcoming Events:

October 22: The first-ever **Busy Beaver Rendezvous**! Help complete end-of-season cleanup work at the IAWP and then enjoy a volunteer appreciation party. All who have volunteered at the wetlands are welcome—as well as first-time volunteers. There is still time for you to jump in and participate!

October 27: First-ever **Spooky Stroll** at the IAWP from 5–7 PM. All you kids aged 4 to 104 are encouraged to come in costume and celebrate Halloween with SAS and the Montana Outdoor Science School (MOSS). Visit activity stations along the railroad berm to learn about corvids, beavers, bats, animal skulls and pelts, fluorescent rocks, and feathers. We will watch the crows come in to roost at the IAWP. It is seriously like a scene from Alfred Hitchcock's movie *The Birds*—you gotta see it! As the crows go to roost, we then watch the beavers come out of their den and become active just before sunset. So, whether you are looking up or down, there is something to be observed and discovered at the IAWP.

"Burdock Busters"—At it Again!

Story and photos by Paulette Epple

"What are you cutting?" "Are you picking chokecherries?" These are the questions Sacajawea Audubon Society (SAS) volunteers are often asked as we walk trails and dive into thickets, wearing protective clothing and armed with clippers, loppers, buckets, and tarps—all in an effort to rid our environment of a pesky (and deadly) invasive weed: burdock.

Answering these questions gives us a chance to explain how burdock takes over native habitats, how the burs get hopelessly entangled in the fur of dogs, deer, bears, and other wildlife, and how **IT CAN KILL BIRDS BY TRAPPING THEM IN THE VELCRO-LIKE SEED HEADS!**

We always end our conversations by encouraging the curious bystander to cut and remove burdock plants that they find flowering and setting seeds during the month of August. We emphasize that all burs should go into the trash for disposal where they can do no harm.

SAS takes this task very seriously. This year, 43 volunteers diligently cut and removed 2,100 pounds of burdock plants and seed heads from the environment, making our trails and parks safer for birds and wildlife. The only way this nasty weed—a biannual Eurasian invasive—can reproduce is by seeds. If we remove the spiky burs filled with seeds, that plant dies without reproducing.

Our "Knock Out Burdock Project" began in 2012, when members first noticed dead birds entangled in the burs. That year a handful of volunteers removed a few bags of burs from the Sourdough Nature Trail. Now our dedicated members are working in dozens of locations—parks, trails, birding hotspots, and even back alleys around town—to eradicate burdock. In our peak years we hauled a disgusting 4,000 to 5,000 pounds of burdock to the landfill.

Burdock Busters at the Four Corners Fishing Access Site (left to right) Becky Ward, Lisa Landenburger, Kevin Ward, and Andy Epple

Lisa Landenburger working a massive pile of burdock!

This year's lower weight of 2,100 pounds is a clear indication of our success in reducing and even eliminating burdock from areas through annual cutting and some targeted spot spraying with herbicide in spring. At some of our work events this year we actually needed to hunt hard to find any burdock and we happily sent our workers home earlier than expected. Here's an example: There has been a particularly severe infestation of burdock around the Drinking Horse Mountain Trailhead and the Fish Technology Center. For several years we hauled out burdock by the truckload, removing 500–1,000 pounds each year. This year we scoured the area and found only 80 pounds of burdock to cut. What a good feeling!

Our success is only due to the hard work and time commitment of our incredible volunteers: Jennifer Abbott, John Ansley (from the Gallatin Co. Weed District), Susan Bilo, Gina Carolan, Brian Cassell, David Cole, John Edwards, Andy Epple, Paulette Epple, Leo Freeman, Adira Groundwater, Lou Ann Harris, Carl Hellyer, Robin Hellyer, Rebecca Himsl, Deborah Hines, Steve Hoffman, Sorin Huseby, Glennis Indreland, Linda Johnson, Peggy Kimmet, Ron Kimmet, Bill Klenn, Lisa Landenburger, Beth Madden, Jennifer Madgic, Adam Makhluf, Frank Marchak, Luke Minton, Emma Narotzky, Stephanie Nelson, John Parker, Judah Peters, Sean Peters, Adele Pittendrigh, Anne Ready, Loreene Reid, Gretchen Rupp, Vicki Saab, Cathy Stamm, Becky Ward, Kevin Ward, and Janet Winnie. Thank you, each and every one of you!

BRIDGER RAPTOR MIGRATION PROJECT UPDATE

By Steve Hoffman

Northern Harrier photo by Kalon Baughan

We are now one-third of the way through our 32nd consecutive full season of scientific migratory raptor counts atop the Bridger Mountains (above Bridger Bowl Ski Area). So far, we are off to a wonderful start! Through September 17th we have already counted 766 raptors of 16 species, with especially strong counts of American Kestrels (105), Northern Harriers (112), and Turkey Vultures (47). Such impressive numbers for these three species suggest the possibility of new record highs by the end of our count on October 31st.

One of the primary purposes for this long-term raptor monitoring effort is to assess the population status and trends of more than a dozen raptor species that use this portion of the Rocky Mountain Flyway as they leave their breeding areas to migrate southward, seeking warmer, prey-rich environs for the winter. As predatory birds, raptors occupy the very pinnacle of the food chain, and thus are quite sensitive to the health of—and changes to—the overall status of the Earth's terrestrial ecosystems. They serve as the proverbial "canary in the coal mine" for the status of our natural ecosystems. These birds warned us about the DDT crisis of the 1950s and 1960s, and they may help us understand the adverse impacts of rapid climate change and other human-caused alterations to our natural world.

What have we learned so far from these long-term raptor counts? For starters, the Golden Eagle—a widespread, adaptable raptor that inhabits much of western North America—has experienced statistically significant, long-term declines of 35–40% since our counts began in 1992. The U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service is currently conducting intensive scientific studies throughout the West to better understand the eagle's status, and likely causes of its long-term decline.

If you might enjoy a nice hike and spending time atop the Bridgers while viewing a great variety of raptors passing by our observation point, we invite your participation in the count. **ALL are welcome!** If you need directions to reach our observation site, do not hesitate to contact me, Steve Hoffman, the founder and coordinator of this project. You can email me at swhoffman0322@gmail.com or call me at (406) 461-5714.

I am very excited to introduce the outstanding team of observer-biologists who are conducting this season's annual count:

Alex McTavish: Alex is from Lake Orion, Michigan. After graduating from Albion College with a Biology degree in 2021, his first field position was working at Sand Lake National Wildlife Refuge, South Dakota. This opportunity included banding waterfowl. This experience helped inspire his career in ornithology. This past summer, as a field technician working on a Greater Sage Grouse research project, Alex conducted raptor and raven surveys, which further enhanced his passion for raptors. Alex says he was absolutely thrilled when given the opportunity to join the fall 2023 Bridger raptor migration observer-biologist team.

Anna Wolke: Anna grew up in New Hampshire, and always loved spending time in the mountains and enjoying wildlife. While completing a degree in Biology at St. Lawrence University, she fell in love with birds when taking an ornithology class. After graduation, she volunteered at the Vermont Institute of Natural Science, caring for a variety of injured raptors. She enjoyed this work tremendously, and was "over the moon" when given the opportunity to join the Bridger Project field team. Anna loves doing the migrant raptor counts, and also enjoys meeting the local community. She hopes folks will continue visiting the team to say hi, ask questions, and enjoy helping them spot the migrating raptors!

May Buckingham: May is from Lowville, New York, and recently graduated from St. Lawrence University (alongside Anna Wolke). Thanks to an eye-opening ornithology course, May discovered her passion for birds. Last summer, she worked for the Birds of Vermont Museum as a land conservation intern. May was determined to continue her avian pursuits, and also was strongly motivated to experience the West (since she had spent her whole life in the Northeast). When she learned about the opportunity to serve as a raptor migration observer-biologist in the Bridger Mountains, she knew it was for her!

BRIDGER RAPTOR FEST 2023

October 7 & 8, 10:00 AM–3:00 PM

Sacajawea Audubon Society will once again participate in the Raptor Fest, running several programs: *The Great Migration Challenge*, the *Binocular Blitz*, *Build a Nifty Nest Box*, and *Sketch-a-Bird*.

As involved SAS members and volunteers, your enthusiasm makes this event memorable for all. Sign up to volunteer with the links below. Questions? Contact sec@sacajaweaaudubon.org.

- ❒ Set up Friday: https://tinyurl.com/raptorfestfri
- ❒ Volunteer Saturday: https://tinyurl.com/raptorfestsat
- ❒ Volunteer Sunday: https://tinyurl.com/raptorfestsun
- ❒ To help with *The Great Migration Challenge*, contact Beth Madden at bethmadden64@gmail.com

Science Inquiry Series: October 18th

Another opportunity to hear from our October presenters will be on **October 18**, through the **2023 Science Inquiry Series**.

Kalon Baughan and Bret Davis will present a talk, entitled ***"Ghosts of the High Country: The Elusive Wolverine and Lynx in Montana,"*** about their ongoing work monitoring these rare high-country animals.

Sponsored by the Gallatin Valley Friends of the Sciences, the fall 2023 Science Inquiry Series will be held in the Museum of the Rockies' Hager Auditorium on Wednesday evenings at 6 PM, followed by a question-and-answer period.

The talks are free and open to the public. Face masks are recommended but not required. For more information, visit: gallatinscience.org/future-presentations

Lynx photo by Kalon Baughan.

Gallatin County Regional Park: Native Plant Enhancement

Article by April Craighead, Craighead Institute

On July 6th a remarkable event occurred at the Gallatin County Regional Park (GCRP). More than twenty volunteers of all ages joined three local nonprofits in enhancing wildlife habitat and improving water quality at the regional park. These wonderful volunteers decided to help their community and habitat to make Bozeman a better place to live. In talking with various volunteers, they were from all over Bozeman, and one young man came all the way from Ennis. We ended up planting more than sixty trees and shrubs, and most people stayed long past the time the event was scheduled to end. The common themes amongst the volunteers was their passion for wildlife and habitats and their desire to be part of a meaningful community—all very powerful and encouraging.

These native trees and shrubs will provide food for birds, increase cover and food for animals of all sizes, improve water quality, provide shade, and create areas for people to explore and contemplate nature. This is a small step toward enhancing Bozeman's urban landscapes as the city continues to grow and native habitats are lost. This is the first phase of this project. We will be planting another sixty trees and shrubs next spring, and hope to plant in other parts of the park in the future.

Volunteers help plant native trees and shrubs at the Gallatin County Regional Park. Photo by Lou Ann Harris.

Funding for this project came from Gallatin County as part of their grant programs. The Craighead Institute, Gallatin Watershed Council, and Sacajawea Audubon Society organized the project and volunteers. These nonprofits all strive to protect wildlife and habitat, but focus on different strategies. This was a unique opportunity to collaborate at a very local level. Most importantly, this project would not have been possible without the dedication and support of the volunteers.

Gallatin Valley Sensitive Lands Protection Plan

By John Edwards

The City of Bozeman is leading the development of a Gallatin Valley Sensitive Lands Protection Plan. Jeff Mihelich, Bozeman City Manager, is the project leader. Gallatin County is heavily involved in a leading role. Belgrade, Three Forks, and Manhattan are also involved.

Sacajawea Audubon Society (SAS) is one of the monetary sponsors of the plan, and John Edwards represents SAS as a member of the Working Group for reviewing and supporting plan development. Public meetings have been held to inform and seek input. Another public meeting is scheduled for the evening of October 19, 2023.

The purposes of this plan are to model the sensitive lands in the valley and propose a plan to protect the most sensitive lands as development proceeds in the valley. The sensitive lands are divided into four themes:

- Wildlife & Biodiversity,
- Connectivity,
- Agricultural Heritage, and
- Water Quality & Quantity.

GALLATIN VALLEY SENSITIVE LANDS PROTECTION PLAN

Connecting our Landscape, Heritage, and Future on Common Ground

The draft plan is currently being reviewed by the Working Group; a revised plan will hopefully be available for public review in early October. The revised plan will be the topic of the October 19 public meeting. Interested members of the public are encouraged to become involved in this process. Information on plan development and status can be viewed at: https://gallatinvalleyplan.bozeman.net.

We encourage you to track this project and become involved by reviewing the draft plan in early October and attending the October 19th evening meeting. Details on the October 19 meeting will be on the website when they are available. The goal is to have a final plan by the end of 2023.

October SAS Book Club News

Please note that the October meeting is a week earlier than our normal schedule, which will resume in November

Our next in-person and virtual Book Club meeting is October 11th at Hope Lutheran Church, 6:30–7:45 PM. We hope you can join us for a discussion of *Halcyon Journey: In Search of the Belted Kingfisher* by Marina Richie (2022).

More than one hundred species of kingfishers brighten every continent except Antarctica. Not all are fishing birds. They range in size from the African Dwarf Kingfisher to the Laughing Kookaburra of Australia. This first book, which features North America's Belted Kingfisher, is a lyrical story of observation, revelation, and curiosity in the presence of flowing waters.

The kingfisher—also known as the halcyon bird—is linked to the mythic origin of halcyon days, a state of happiness that Marina Richie hopes to find outside her back door in Missoula, Montana. Epiphanies and a citizen-science discovery punctuate days tracking a bird that outwits at every turn. The female is more colorful than the male (unusual and puzzling) and the birds' earthen nest holes are difficult to locate.

While the heart of the drama takes place on Rattlesnake Creek in Missoula, the author's adventures in search of kingfisher kin on the lower Rio Grande, in South Africa, and in London illuminate her relationships with the birds of Montana. In the quiet of winter, she explores tribal stories of the kingfisher as messenger and helper.

If you would like to be included in monthly email reminders or to attend the meeting virtually, please email or call Elisabeth Swanson: elsswa@gmail.com | (406) 570-8325. For other questions you can email or call our other leader, Hilary Johnson: ralphhilary@gmail.com | (406) 599-1446.

We want to again thank **Tom Murphy** for his generous donation last year of his wonderful book, ***Birds: Masters of the Air, Land & Water.*** All proceeds from the sale of his donated books went to support Sacajawea Audubon Society. The few books that were left were donated to The Big Timber Carnegie Public Library, The Madison Valley Public Library, The Gallatin Valley Superintendent of Public Schools, and the Community Libraries of Three Forks, Manhattan, and Belgrade.

OCTOBER BIG DAY is coming!

Last October, nearly 35,000 people from 185 countries submitted 80,000 checklists with eBird, demonstrating the power of birds to bring people together.

Join us from wherever you are on **Saturday, October 14, 2023,** for another day-long celebration of birds. This year's event coincides with both International Migratory Bird Day and Global Bird Weekend.

Submit at least one eBird checklist on **October Big Day** and help us set a new world record!

Visit https://ebird.org/news/october-big-day-2023 for more information, how to participate, and many helpful links, including:

- ❒ Link to the free ***eBird Essentials*** course
- ❒ Free access to ***Birds of the World*** starting at 8 AM (Eastern Standard Time) on Friday, October 13th, through 9 AM ET on Monday, October 16th
- ❒ eBird ***Mobile Explore***
- ❒ The Cornell Lab's free ***Merlin Bird ID*** app
- ❒ Access to real-time submissions from around the world

No matter where you go birding on October 14th, have fun, enjoy the birds you find, and share your observations with eBird. Your checklists will help us better understand global bird populations.

It's Time to Renew Your SAS Annual Local Membership for 2024

Renew Today for January–December 2024

Sacajawea Audubon Society (SAS) encourages all of you who enjoy our field trips and monthly programs or support our conservation work to join/renew your local chapter membership. 100% of your Local Membership dues will directly support SAS educational and conservation programs.

Even if you belong to the National Audubon Society (NAS), we need your support through a Local SAS Membership. As an SAS member you'll enjoy the benefits of membership while knowing that your annual dues are used locally for conservation right here in your own neighborhood.

Please help us ensure a secure future for what remains of the wildlife and wildlands in the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem of Montana by joining our flock and flying high together today.

You can choose from the following membership levels as an Individual or Family:

- ❒ Basic Membership ……..…….. $25
- ❒ Supporting Membership ….....…… $50
  (Supporting = additional local conservation and education projects)
- ❒ Student Membership …… $10
  (College & High School Students)

Join or Renew for 2024 by filling out the membership form on the next page, or join online at: https://sacajaweaaudubon.org/for-members/.

SAS Members:

- Protect working lands for birds and other wildlife;
- Preserve and protect bird species and their habitats;
- Support bird-friendly communities in Montana with our bird-friendly landscape program;
- Contribute to important environmental education programs for people of all ages and abilities on birds, wildlife, and habitat;
- Support vital partnerships between other nonprofit environmental groups, citizens, and local government to shape the health of our community; and
- Advocate for important environmental issues locally and regionally.

SAS Members Enjoy:

- Free Monthly Keynote Speaker meetings;
- Savings on purchases and access to member-only sales;

Northern Flicker photo by Terri Narotzky.

- Free *Birding Hotspots of Gallatin Valley*, a guide to birding around the Gallatin Valley and beyond;
- Free monthly member e-newsletter, so you'll always know what's going on (published nine times/year);
- Member-only discounts on educational courses, programs, and special events;
- Opportunities to meet new people and become part of a friendly group that shares an interest in birds, wildlife, the environment, and conservation;
- Participation in many citizen science projects; and
- Free guided birding field trips.

Sacajawea Audubon Society's Local Chapter membership does not include membership in the National Audubon Society. SAS is an independent 501(c)3 nonprofit organization with its own board of directors, membership, budget, and programs. We rely on financial support from local members to carry out our wide array of programs.

As a chapter of National Audubon Society (NAS), we fully value and support their work and advocacy. We encourage you, in addition to your SAS local membership, to join or renew your membership in NAS. Check the box on the SAS membership form and add $20 to join or renew with NAS.

We hope that you will join today, as we approach our 57th year as an effective local grass-roots group, building on an interest in birds to promote the conservation of our natural environment through enjoyment, education, and action.

Thank You,

Sacajawea Audubon Society's Board of Directors

SACAJAWEA AUDUBON SOCIETY MEMBERSHIP 2024

Individual or Family | January–December 2024

❒ **Basic Membership** **$25**

❒ **Supporting Membership** **$50**
(Supporting local conservation & education projects)

❒ **Student Membership** **$10**
(College & High School Students)

❒ **Additional Donation $**_____

❒ Bridger Raptor Study
❒ Education Projects
❒ Story Mill Park Bird Feeding Station
❒ Wetland Campaign
❒ Conservation Projects
❒ Wherever is Needed

Name _____

Address _____
(Street or PO Box)

_____
(City) *(State)* *(Zip)*

Phone (_____) _____

Email _____

Sacajawea Audubon Society Newsletter is sent by email. ❒ I would like a paper newsletter mailed to me.

We do not share your information except with National Audubon Society, 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!

Bridger Raptor Project Raffle Tickets Available!

There is nothing quite like observing fall raptor migration in the Bridger Mountains! For the past 32 years, one of the most important localities for monitoring migrating Golden Eagles in the western United States has been the Bridger Range, northeast of Bozeman, Montana. The Bridger monitoring site is located at the top of the ridge adjacent to the Bridger Bowl Ski area *(see article on page 6).*

The Bridger Mountains Raptor Survey is funded and managed by Sacajawea Audubon Society. We are committed to continuing this management role for the foreseeable future, because continuation of this monitoring program is critical in providing the data needed to assess population trends in Golden Eagles and other raptors.

To help pay for the continuation of this program, **Bridger Bowl Ski Area has donated two Season Passes valued at $975 each** (the season pass price increases to $1,075 on November 1st).

YOU can help cover the costs of the Bridger Mountain Raptor Count by purchasing a **Bridger Raptor Project Raffle Ticket**. Tickets are $10 each or 6 for $50. To get tickets:

1. Mail your check (with "Bridger Raptor Project raffle tickets" in the memo) to Sacajawea Audubon Society, PO Box 1711, Bozeman, MT 59771

Photo courtesy of HawkWatch

2. Call or text **(406) 600-6666** for tickets
3. Email membership@sacajaweaaudubon.org and we will mail you tickets
4. Purchase raffle tickets at the SAS meeting on October 9, November 13, or December 11. The drawing will be held December 11 at the SAS meeting.

Be one of two winners of a 2023-24 adult season ski pass to Bridger Bowl! [NOTE: if you have already purchased your season pass, Bridger Bowl will reimburse you if you win!]

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

Change Service Requested

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

Sacajawea Audubon Society's Monthly Newsletter is available electronically to all Sacajawea Audubon Society members, September through May.

Deadline for article submission is the 10th 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

FeederWatch 2023-2024

The 37th season of FeederWatch begins **November 1st, 2023**, and runs through **April 30th, 2024**. Even if you only count once, every count is valuable.

The more years you participate, the more valuable your counts become.

YOU DON'T NEED TO HAVE FEEDERS TO PARTICIPTE IN FEEDERWATCH!

Counting birds attracted to your habitat and plantings is just as valuable as counting birds at feeders. If you decide not to provide seed or feeders, we hope you will still participate in FeederWatch.

Learn more, including helpful bird ID tips, information about gardening for birds, and how to register and enter your data by visiting:

https://feederwatch.org/

Red-breasted Nuthatch photo by Terri Narotsky.