NOVEMBER 2023

Sacajawea Audubon News

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

SAS Monthly Program: Monday, November 13th, Hope Lutheran Church

"Identifying threats to one of Africa's most endangered large carnivores: the Painted Dog" *with Ben Goodheart*

The painted dog, also known as the African wild dog, painted wolf, or cape hunting dog, is one of the most endangered carnivores in the world, with only 1,200 adults remaining in the wild today. Painted dogs are known for their hunting prowess, their devoted parental care, and their unbreakable bonds in the pack. Unfortunately, human caused disturbances over the last century have reduced the population of painted dogs to just a fragment of their former numbers, covering just a small percentage of their historic range.

Its not too late for painted dogs, and organizations like the Zambian Carnivore Programme (with very close ties to the Gallatin valley) work on the ground with local communities to conserve these remaining large carnivores. Painted dogs occur at very low densities on the landscape and are difficult to study, let alone conserve. Over ten years of population monitoring on a painted dog population in the Greater Kafue Ecosystem has unlocked new insights into demographic drivers for these elusive carnivores, threats to their populations, and strategies for their conservation.

Come learn about ongoing work to conserve painted dogs in one of Africa's largest remaining wildernesses.

SAS board member Ben Goodheart is a PhD student here at Montana State University studying the impacts of human caused prey depletion on one of Zambia's last remaining painted dog populations. Upon completion of his undergraduate degree from the University of Montana in 2012, he has always maintained a home base in western Montana where he has worked on numerous projects with birds and forest carnivores throughout Montana and Idaho. In 2016, Ben joined the Zambian Carnivore Programme as an ecologist, where he has been focusing on large-carnivore conservation—particularly painted dogs—ever since.

African wild dog photo courtesy of Ben Goodheart.

Ben Goodheart

The in-person meeting will be held Monday, November 13th at Hope Lutheran Church, 2152 West Graf (off S. 19th). A social begins at 6:30 PM; the program begins at 7:00 PM. Attendees are encouraged to bring their own reusable cups.

For virtual attendance, please register at https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/5811926539999981919

Attendees—whether in person or virtual—are encouraged to share their bird sightings at this and every monthly program.

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.

Sacajawea Audubon Society Loses a Dear Friend

By Steve Hoffman

Marian Jean Setter, a dear friend of both Montana Audubon and Sacajawea Audubon Society for decades, passed away at the age of 101 on 30 August 2023 in Great Falls. Jean generously supported both the Bridger Raptor Migration Project and the Indreland Audubon Wetland Preserve, and was a lifelong supporter of a great many environmental and social causes throughout her long life. Jean was a close friend of mine; I had the good fortune to know her through her annual, consistent, generous support of Montana Audubon.

Steve Hoffman and Jean Setter.

Jean grew up in the Judith Basin on a ranch in the foothills of the Little Belt Mountains, near Utica. There she learned to love nature and the outdoors, and spent much of her childhood exploring and camping in the Little Belts on horseback with her younger sister Dorothy and her friends. Jean spent her entire career as a nurse in the Army (1945–1976), retiring as a full Colonel. Upon her retirement she was awarded the Legion of Merit by the President for exceptional meritorious conduct throughout her 31-year career with the Army and Army Reserve.

Jean never married. She loved birds, and participated in the annual Christmas Bird Count in Great Falls for more than 40 years! As a Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks volunteer, she conducted an annual spring raptor route from Fort Benton to Geraldine, where she traveled the backroads identifying and counting the hawks, eagles, falcons, and other raptors. She was also actively involved in their "Becoming an Outdoors Woman" program as well as Beartooth Wildlife Management Area conservation efforts.

Most of all, Jean was the best friend anyone could ask for. I recall conversations with Jean lasting many hours at a time, discussing everything from her fascinating experiences with the Army to her latest book readings and current politics. Jean's memory and cognitive abilities remained sharp until her very last days. Jean shall be deeply missed by all who knew her.

THANK YOU, Jean, for living a life that inspired everyone who was fortunate enough to enjoy your compassion, empathy, loyal friendship and commitment to nature conservation!

SACAJAWEA AUDUBON SOCIETY OFFICERS AND COMMITTEE CHAIRS

Officers

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

Board Members

Aaron Clausen	aaronclausen@sacajaweaaudubon.org
Ben Goodheart	bengoodheart@sacajaweaaudubon.org
Mikaela Howie	mikaelahowie@sacajaweaaudubon.org
Frank Marchak	frankmarchak@sacajaweaaudubon.org
Vicki Saab	vickisaab@sacajaweaaudubon.org
Ken Sinay	kensinay@sacajaweaaudubon.org
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
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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: NOV. 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: HOMESCHOOL GROUP VISITS THE WETLAND

Article and photos by Emma Narotzky

BUSY BEAVERS
Indreland Audubon Wetland Preserve

A very enthusiastic Montana Outdoor Science School (MOSS) homeschool group visited the IAWP this fall, where they dissected cattails, learned to use binoculars, learned how birds and beavers deal with the changing seasons, and handled beaver skulls and pelts.

With seasonal work at the wetland wrapping up, please consider helping with ongoing projects.

We are in the process of setting up a study on making our roads safer for animals near the IAWP.

There will be surveying work needed for this study in all seasons. Email wetlands@sacajaweaaudubon.org to volunteer or learn more.

If you can't commit to the study but still want to help, you can contribute citizen science observations by reporting dead and live animals seen along the stretch of highway that borders the IAWP. Send your observations to wetlands@sacajaweaaudubon.org

Although our Busy Beaver activity is slowing down, you can remain informed and look forward to regular updates by email. Sign up to become an IAWP Busy Beaver and be notified of volunteer opportunities, training, and events:

https://tinyurl.com/iawpbusybeavers

Wetland Preservation Project Committee:

BozemanWetlands.org | (406) 600-6666
wetlands@sacajaweaaudubon.org

Committee members: Loreene Reid, Chris Nixon, Billy Burton, John Edwards, Aaron Clausen, Frank Marchak, Emma Narotzky, Bill Simkins

Consultants: Rich McEldowney *(Confluence, Inc.)*; Wendy Weaver and Jeannette Blank *(MT Freshwater Partners)*; Pat Byorth *(Trout Unlimited)*; Marty Matsen *(Fall Creek Planning)*; Chris Hildebrandt *(Ducks Unlimited)*

(Left) A beautiful fall day at the IAWP! (Right) Sacajawea Audubon Society board member Frank Marchak with a young homeschool group who were excited to learn unique aspects of beaver anatomy.

BIRD NOTES

by John Parker

As I'm sure you are aware, we had an exceptionally mild early fall. The mild weather—and lack of major storm systems moving through southwestern Montana during the peak passerine migration—made finding unusual birds a bit more difficult. Even so, birders in this area discovered a wide variety of birds in the past two months.

One of the big surprises this fall were **Pygmy Nuthatches** found at two different locations two days apart. While on lunch break August 17th, Andrew Guttenberg's attention was drawn to a mixed flock of birds moving through the lodgepole forest in the Big Sky area. The flock included two Pygmy Nuthatches. Then two days later, as Dave Benes was walking the Cliff Creek trail southwest of Bozeman, he saw at least three Pygmy Nuthatches. These nuthatches were also part of a mixed flock moving through a primarily Douglas fir forest. Pygmy Nuthatches are usually closely associated with ponderosa pine forests, so these nuthatches are not likely to be part of a resident population, but rather birds dispersing from another area.

Beside the nuthatches, Dave Benes also discovered a migrating **Alder Flycatcher** at the Cameron Bridge fishing access site west of Belgrade on September 9th. This flycatcher, only the second record for southwest Montana, was feeding along a channel of the Gallatin River. Dave also spotted a **Western Wood Pewee** in Gallatin Gateway on September 29th, for a late local record.

Harrison Reservoir always seems to produce a number of interesting birds during the late summer and on into late fall until the lake freezes over, and this year has been no exception. First on the list of great birds at the lake was the **Parasitic Jaeger** that Sam Koenen and Josiah Kiehl spotted on August 18th. Then on September 16th the ten participants on the Sacajawea Audubon Society field trip were treated to excellent views of another adult Parasitic Jaeger. Later in the month, on the 30th, Vic Fesolowitz and Kim Obbink found a single **American Golden Plover** feeding on the mudflats of the reservoir. Proving that every day is different at Harrison, the following day Andrew Guttenberg saw a **Sabine's Gull** at the lake but not the plover. Finally, Andrew and John Parker returned to Harrison on October 8th and relocated a **Long-billed Curlew** that was first seen there on September 13th in the company of another curlew. Any curlew in Montana after the first of September is notable. This sighting of a Long-billed Curlew is the latest date documented for Montana, and is most likely an injured bird that is unable to fly.

Pygmy Nuthatch photo by Dave Benes.

Lesser Goldfinch sightings are becoming a bit more common in this part of Montana, with the first one being reported for the area only thirteen years ago. So, it was an exciting sighting for Beth Madden when one visited her south Bozeman feeder on October 1st.

Notable warblers so far this fall have been the **Chestnut-sided Warblers** found foraging in the east woods of Glen Lake Rotary Park. On September 24th Stephanie Nelson and Lou Ann Harris found an immature Chestnut-sided Warbler, and then three days later Matt Keefer spotted a second.

On September 25th I was shocked to see a **Blue Gray Gnatcatcher** in our yard south of Bozeman. This bird was not on my radar for a possible yard bird. This sighting was only the third record for Gallatin County, and the first away from the dry hills along the Missouri River. *(continued on page 5)*

MONTANA AUDUBON UPDATES *by Lauren Smith*

SAVE THE DATE FOR THE 2024 *WINGS ACROSS THE BIG SKY* BIRDING FESTIVAL

Though next summer seems far away, we're already hard at work planning the next *Wings Across the Big Sky* Birding Festival!

The festival will be held in **Helena, May 31–June 2, 2024**. Montana Audubon is partnering with Last Chance Audubon, and we're working to put together some fantastic field trips. We're excited to share those details as soon as they're finalized! We're also going to have multiple hotel options, including a budget-friendly option to stay at Carroll College, our main festival location. *More information is coming soon!*

NORTH BRIDGER BISON BECOMES FIRST AUDUBON-CERTIFIED BISON RANCH IN MONTANA!

North Bridger Bison, located in Wilsall, about 30 miles north of Livingston, is the first Audubon Certified bison ranch in Montana! This means that North Bridger Bison can now use the Audubon Certified bird-friendly seal, a product label that lets consumers know that these products come from bison that grazed on ranches managed for birds and biodiversity.

The Skoglund family on their ranch, holding the Audubon Certified seal. Photo courtesy of Matt Skoglund.

Learn more about the Audubon Conservation Ranching program in Montana and North Bridger Bison in a short video from Kyle Dudgeon Creative. The link below takes you to the Montana Audubon website, and you'll need to scroll to the bottom of the page to see the video.

https://mtaudubon.org/audubon-and-partners-announce-first-bird-friendly-certified-bison-ranch-in-montana/

On September 30th, while birding Graf Park in Bozeman, Robin Wolcott discovered and photographed an extremely late **Calliope Hummingbird**. The previous late date for Montana was September 27th. A week into October an unidentified hummingbird was sporadically coming to Tamie and John Parker's flower boxes. Then on October 10th they were able to get photos of what turned out to be a female **Anna's Hummingbird**. Anna's Hummingbirds are quite rare east of the divide and this is only the fifth time one has been documented in Gallatin County.

This fall Ben Goodheart proved that spending time in a patch of good habitat pays dividends. Ben has frequently been birding the Indreland Audubon Wetland Preserve (IAWP) in east Bozeman, and turning up many good birds. On October 8th Ben found a **Swamp Sparrow** at the IAWP, which is always a tough bird to find in this area. But Ben topped that two days earlier by finding a **Bewick's Wren** in the hillside tangles at the IAWP. Bewick's Wrens are very rare in Montana, and especially so east of the Continental Divide. This is only the second time one has been seen in southwest Montana, with the previous sighting coming eighteen years ago at the Sourdough Nature Trail, also in Bozeman.

Parasitic Jaeger photo by George Nixon.

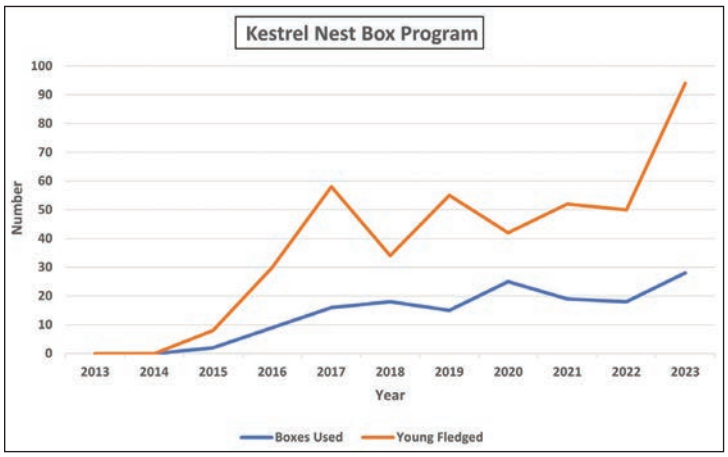
A Banner Year for Kestrels!

By Paulette Epple

This was the most successful year EVER for our kestrel nest box program and we were happy to be overwhelmed as our volunteers ran all over four counties, checking boxes and banding young. We set new record high numbers with **28 boxes in use and 94 chicks fledged**! Just to put that in perspective, over the last six years with similar numbers of boxes installed, we fledged an average of 48 chicks annually. With the national kestrel population on a slow, continuous decline, it's so gratifying to know that our local kestrel population is doing well and has responded so positively to our nest boxes. Most of these birds would not be nesting around here without our boxes since there really aren't that many trees with appropriate nesting cavities in prime kestrel habitat.

A bucket of male kestrel chicks awaiting banding. Photo by Paulette Epple.

Below is a graph of the 11 years of our nest box program showing the number of boxes used each year and the number of kestrels fledged. You will note that the first four years had very limited success. Fewer boxes were out at that time, and many were placed in poor habitat locations. Since then, more boxes were installed and others were moved to more suitable habitat locations.



Remember our late winter and slow start to spring. The Gallatin Valley was still under deep snow at the end of March, and it was late April before much of it melted off. So, we expected a late start to the kestrel nesting season. WRONG! The kestrels surprised us by nesting earlier than usual. We started banding this year on June 17th, and we already had 23 nestlings banded on June 23. The season also went longer than expected, with the final chicks fledging around August 10th. Though there were a few nest failures this season for various reasons, we had no predation in any of our boxes. We did find evidence of some interesting prey species in the boxes. One box showed that the adults had perfected the art of hunting chipmunks with three chipmunk tails visible in the box. Another box held the remains of a western jumping mouse with its very long tail still intact.

A female kestrel chick, 24 days old. Photo by Holly Pippel.

Last February we received notice of one of our Gallatin Valley banded birds live-caught in Tlaxcala, Mexico near Veracruz, confirming an amazing 2,000-mile winter migration. This season we were able to band 93 kestrel chicks with the hope that we will get more band returns in the future.

We wish to express our sincere thanks to all our landowners who host our boxes, our volunteers who clean and monitor boxes, and our kestrel box sponsors who support this program. You, too, can sponsor a box and thus receive detailed reports, fun stories, and photos throughout the summer next year. Look for the GIVE button on our website and choose "sponsor a kestrel box."

2023 BRIDGER RAPTOR MIGRATION PROJECT UPDATE:
Where are the Golden Eagles?

By Steve Hoffman

With only 16 days remaining before the end of the 2023 Bridger raptor migration count (32nd consecutive season), it seems appropriate to take a hard look at this season's migrant raptor count results thus far. As of October 15th, we have documented record or near-record numbers of five species:

- **Turkey Vulture** (57—previous record was 48 in 2013);
- **Northern Harrier** (189—record is 230 in 1998);
- **Cooper's Hawk** (383—previous record was 347 in 1997);
- **Broad-winged Hawk** (81—previous record was 48 in 2013); and
- **American Kestrel** (233—previous record was 181 in 2015).

Counts thus far for most other species are near average numbers, with the exception of **Northern Goshawk** (only six recorded thus far, the second-lowest count on record); **Rough-legged Hawk** (only a single bird has been counted thus far!); and **Golden Eagle** (only 349 tallied thus far—many hundreds below what we would have anticipated by this time of year, and only 27% of the long-term average of 1,278!).

Regarding Golden Eagles, we hypothesize that they may have chosen a somewhat different route, due to a preponderance of both rainy conditions and stronger thermal lift. This was due to more frequent clear skies during what is generally considered to be the seasonal peak of the Golden Eagle migration (early to mid-October) as well as more northerly and northwesterly winds throughout this fall. Based on previous satellite telemetry research by Missoula-based Raptor View Research Institute and others, we know that many Golden Eagles prefer a more easterly route toward the Crazy Mountains. If this route was used significantly more in 2023, fewer eagles would be counted at our observation point along the Southern Bridger Flyway. (This may be at least partly due to atmospheric changes resulting from climate change.)

There is, of course, a chance that several hundred more Golden Eagles will be counted between now and the end of October. This does not seem likely, however.

We hope to continue the Bridger Raptor Migration Project for decades to come. Additional data—including from satellite radios on more eagles—may help us understand the patterns and nuances of this raptor flyway and the implications for evaluating these counts in an effort to better determine the long-term health and changes in Golden Eagles and ALL raptor populations using this important flyway.

Volunteers John Parker and Judy Tsiang assist hawkwatcher Anna Wolke. Photo by Beth Madden.

We wish to sincerely thank Sacajawea Audubon Society members for their continued sponsorship and financial support for the 2023 count, as well as our two stalwart observers, May Buckingham and Anna Wolke, for their outstanding, consistent efforts to conduct this season's count. We also wish to extend our deepest appreciation to several dedicated volunteer observers, including: John Ashley, Corinne Casolara, Bret Davis, Kyle Dudgeon, Paulette Epple, Andrew Guttenberg, Margaret Hillhouse, Mikaela Howie, Beth Madden, Rob Malo, Nina Moore, John Parker, Lynn Postler, Craig Postler, Vicki Saab, Judy Tsiang, Colleen Zathey, and likely a few others.

Thus far, critical financial support for the 2023 Bridger Raptor Project has been received from: Sacajawea Audubon Society, Bill Simkins & Erna Smeets, Custer Gallatin National Forest, GCC Trident Cement Plant, Nick Bolgiano, Gina Carolan, and Scotty & Carolyn Heppel.

PLEASE NOTE: At the time of this writing, due to the untimely passing of Jean Setter, our dear friend and long-time generous financial supporter of this project (*see related article on page 2*), the Fall 2023 Bridger Project has incurred a significant shortfall of several thousand dollars. Hence, please consider a designated gift to Sacajawea Audubon Society to help us meet our 2023 Bridger Raptor Migration Project goal.

THANK YOU!

Bridger Raptor Fest 2023—A Great Success!

Sacajawea Audubon Society (SAS) staffed educational stations and activities that were enjoyed by more than 5,000 participants at **Raptor Festival 2023**. Thank you to the many SAS volunteers who shared their time and enthusiasm before and during the festival, making it a great success:

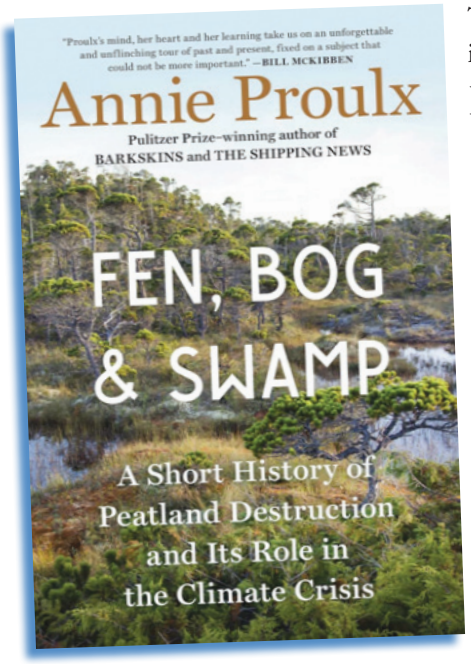
Bjorn Anderson, Savannah Apedaile, Noreen Breeding, Roger Breeding, Raelyn Brown, Gina Carolan, Aaron Clausen, Sonja Clausen, David Cole, Pat Craig, John Edwards, Andy Epple, Paulette Epple, Jack Evans, Brooke Everest, Kelsey Frey, Adira Groundwater, Lou Ann Harris, Catherine Hogan Kalmanson, Elizabeth Jarvis, Bill Klenn, Kay Lansverk, Marvin Lansverk, Jason Linguanti, Julie Lucas, Beth Madden, Adam Makhluf, Lindsay Manke-Miller, Frank Marchak, Luke Minton, Bob Narotzky, Terri Narotzky, Peggy Osbourn, Michelle Paluck, Addison Perryman, Sean Peters, John Plummer, Marian Plummer, Eden Portraz, Anne Ready, Loreene Reid, Vicki Saab, Tara Sadera, Bill Shannon, Sherry Staub, Stephanie Stout, Sandy Taylor, Nonnie Thompson, Erin Tope, Judy Tsiang, Judy Tucker, Jessica Wilson, and Janet Winnie.

We greatly appreciate Simkins-Hallin and Owenhouse Ace Hardware for providing bird box building materials.

(Clockwise from top left) The Great Migration Challenge game; Sketch-a-Bird activity (photos by Emma Narotzky); The Binocular Blitz is enjoyed by the whole family; The bird study skins at the SAS table attract a crowd (photos by Paulette Epple).

SAS BOOK CLUB UPDATE FOR NOVEMBER 2023

This month the Sacajawea Audubon Society (SAS) Book Club meeting will be held on **November 15th** at **Hope Lutheran Church, Room 129** from **6:30–7:45 PM**. We hope you can join us in person or virtually for a discussion of ***Fen, Bog and Swamp*** by Annie Proulx (2022). Dessert will be provided. Please bring your own hot drink.



This slender volume is timely to all of us who reside in Gallatin Valley and have seen wetlands eliminated or reduced to narrow ribbons of habitat. These slivers of marshy habitat are suitable to decorate our Valley's scenery but too meager to afford an abundant life for birds and wildlife. In contrast, the Indreland Audubon Wetland Preserve, donated to Sacajawea Audubon Society and sustained in health by dozens of Chapter members, shows what is possible if we cherish wetlands and allow them to nourish us.

Describing both the importance and delight of *Fen, Bog and Swamp*, author Anthony Doerr wrote:

So often feared, dredged and drained, swamps, bogs and fens (it turns out) are just as vital to our species' survival on this planet as healthy forests and oceans—perhaps more so.…I learned something new—and found amazing—on every page.

Author Annie Proulx is known for the deep dive into history she provides as readers explore the vanishing ecosystems she brings to life. She is also known as a "writer's writer," perhaps one of the reasons her peers awarded her the Pulitzer Prize twice in her career. Readers are drawn into this book in the first few pages as the author, at three years old, followed her mother through a blueberry thicket and suddenly confronted a swamp that was both fascinating and fear-inducing with its inky water and orb spiders occupying the grassy tussocks that provided the only dryland path through the water. At 87 years old when *Fen, Bog and Swamp* was published in 2022, Proulx shows the complexity and magnificent beauty of peat-forming wetlands, and the irresponsible removal of these life-giving ecosystems.

AWARDS: Best Book of the Year by *The New Yorker* and *Literary Hub*.

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

Black-headed Grosbeak photo by Terri Narotzky.

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 Shrike 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 ❒ Wetland Campaign
❒ Story Mill Park Bird Feeding Station ❒ 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!

NOV '23 newsletter

Bridger Raptor Project Raffle Tickets Still 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.

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 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 $1,075 each.**

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 November 13 or December 11. The drawing will be held December 11th 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.

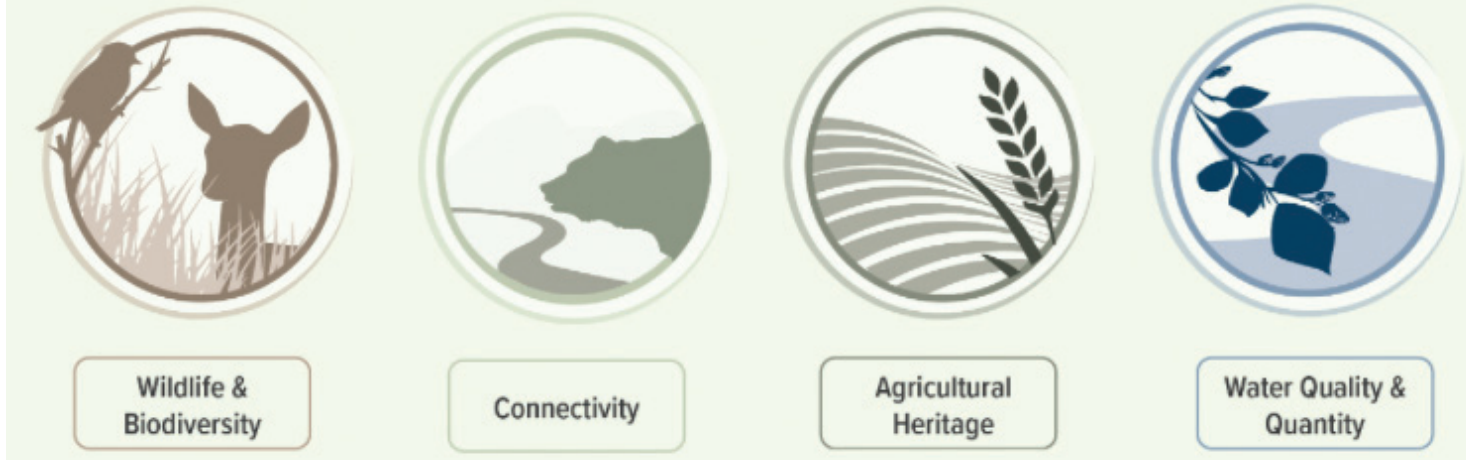
Sacajawea Audubon Society's Monthly Newsletter is available electronically to all Sacajawea Audubon Society members, September through May.

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

GALLATIN VALLEY SENSITIVE LANDS PROTECTION PLAN



Graphic from gallatinvalleyplan.bozeman.net

YOUR COMMENTS ARE IMPORTANT!

The Gallatin Valley Sensitive Lands Protection Plan identifies areas with resources that are disproportionately susceptible to impacts from development and degradation. The Draft Plan was released to the public on October 16th. **The comment period will only run through November 5.** We encourage everyone who has not already done so to review the Draft Plan online at gallatinvalleyplan.bozeman.net and provide your comments.

Let's do our best to protect this area we all love!