NOVEMBER 2025

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 & Membership Meeting: Monday, November 10

Trek Rediscovers Bird Lost to Science for More than 125 Years

Illustration by Jan Wilczur/Birds of the World.

with Bozeman Conservation Biologist, Jason Gregg

From the rugged islands of southeast Papua New Guinea to the vaults of the American Museum of Natural History, join conservation biologist Jason Gregg for a presentation about his search for the **Black-naped Pheasant-Pigeon**, a secretive and extremely rare bird which was lost to science for more than 125 years. We'll hear how Jason and his team worked with highly knowledgeable indigenous hunters in Papua New Guinea to locate the pheasant-pigeon, why searching for missing species is critical for fighting extinction, and what it will take to locate other lost birds across the Pacific.

The expedition team included members from ABC, the Cornell Lab, and the Papua New Guinea National Museum, along with local Papua New Guineans.

Jason Gregg is a conservation biologist and writer based in Bozeman, MT. He has more than a decade of experience in applied conservation and has led several research expeditions in Papua New Guinea and the western Pacific. His writing on science and conservation has appeared in Audubon Magazine, Mongabay, and The Atlantic. He is currently working on a masters thesis at Montana State University at the Linck Lab which studies avian population and conservation genetics, biogeography, and evolutionary ecology.

Please visit his website for more information: www.jasonjgregg.com

Overjoyed! Shocked! Seeing the first-ever camera trap images of 'Auwo', local name for the Black-naped Pheasant Pigeon.

The in-person meeting will be held Monday, November 10, 2025 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 sacajaweaaudubon.org/. 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 Chris Nixon at programs@sacajaweaaudubon.org.

A MESSAGE *from* SAS PRESIDENT, CHRIS NIXON

Fall is upon us and so are some excellent opportunities to contribute as a citizen scientist and volunteer. I invite you all to take part in **Project Feeder Watch** (even if you've never done so before). It is one of the best ways for you to ensure birds in the Northern Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem of Montana (SAS Chapter Coverage Area) are not left out of census efforts. This encompassing citizen science project is not an "SAS conducted project", yet many of our SAS members take part each year, contributing important data to this on-going scientific research.

However, my biggest encouragement to you during the upcoming Holiday Season is for you to **renew your memberships** in both our local **Sacajawea Audubon Society** and **National Audubon Society**. All membership dues to our local chapter stay here in the immediate area. Your dues directly benefit birds, other wildlife, and ecologic services in the Northern Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem of Montana. Browse through this newsletter and you will see just a few of the many important projects your donations make possible. None of the work done through our local chapter would happen without your financial contributions and thousands of hours of volunteer service all so enthusiastically given. **SAS DOES NOT HAVE A STAFF!** How many organizations do you know that accomplish what we do without staff? Your organization is truly unique to this area and; **YOUR PARTICIPATION HELPS MAKE IT ALL HAPPEN!** Visit: sacajaweaaudubon.org/membership/ to renew today.

As you renew your membership, consider purchasing **raffle tickets** for the **Bridger Bowl Season Ski Pass**. This raffle funds our **Bridger Raptor Count**. We are still a bit short in meeting this season's fundraising for this critical project.

To gain more insight into SAS projects and activities, please join us at this year's special **Holiday Program** at the Emerson Center for Arts and Culture (*see page 12*). In addition to the uplifting program that will be provided by Photographer/Poet Uschi Carpenter, our board and volunteers will have numerous table displays. From these displays you can learn about the **MANY PROJECTS/PROGRAMS** being championed and accomplished by SAS members/volunteers.

The SAS Board and many SAS member-volunteers look forward to seeing you there!

SACAJAWEA AUDUBON SOCIETY OFFICERS AND COMMITTEE CHAIRS

Officers

President	Chris Nixon pres@sacajaweaaudubon.org
Vice President	Doug McSpadden vicepres@sacajaweaaudubon.org
Treasurer	Loreene Reid treas@sacajaweaaudubon.org
Secretary	Mikaela Howie sec@sacajaweaaudubon.org

Board Members

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John Edwards	johnedwards@sacajaweaaudubon.org
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Emma Narotzky	emmanarotzky@sacajaweaaudubon.org
Bret Davis	bretdavis@sacajaweaaudubon.org

Activity Leaders and Committee Chairs

Education Chair	**Open Position**
Conservation Co-Chairs	Paulette Epple conservation@sacajaweaaudubon.org Lou Ann Harris louann@sacajaweaaudubon.org
Financial Committee Chair	Brad Frazee bradf@sacajaweaaudubon.org
Field Trips, Bird Sightings	John Parker birdsightings@sacajaweaaudubon.org
Hospitality	**Open Position**
Membership	Loreene Reid membership@sacajaweaaudubon.org
Newsletter	Amy Crowder and Chris Nixon newsletter@sacajaweaaudubon.org
Programs	**Open Position**
Website	Lou Ann Harris & Doug McSpadden webmaster@sacajaweaaudubon.org
Social Media/ Communications	Lou Ann Harris and Mikaela Howie socialmedia@sacajaweaaudubon.org
Book Club	Elisabeth Swanson & Hilary Johnson bookclub@sacajaweaaudubon.org
Newsletter Design	Amy Crowder amy@vandycreative.com

Indreland Audubon Wetland Preserve Board Members

President	Frank Marchak, frankm@bozemanwetlands.org
Treasurer	Loreene Reid, loreener@bozemanwetlands.org
Board Members	Billy Burton, billyb@bozemanwetlands.org Bill Simkins, bills@bozemanwetlands.org
Stewardship Intern & Busy Beaver Coordinator	Morgan Anderson morgana@bozemanwetlands.org

BIRD NOTES

by John Parker

Overall, the first half of this fall has been fairly mild without any extended periods of stormy weather. Due to the mild start to the season, there were no major fallouts of birds. The two largest storm systems occurred at the end of August and mid-September, both of which created a good push of birds through this area. One of my more memorable moments this season happened during the first of these stormy periods. On the rainy morning of August 28th, while birding in the woods east of Glen Lake in north Bozeman, I witnessed a massing of around 100 **Eastern Kingbirds** along the East Gallatin River.

Maybe the most notable shorebird of the fall was an **American-Golden Plover** that Josiah Kiehl and Ian Van Coller found at Harrison Reservoir on October 4th. Side by side with the American-Golden Plover were four **Black-bellied Plovers**, which provided a nice comparison of these similar plovers.

So far this autumn there hasn't been much of a movement of **Blue Jays** into this corner of Montana. One odd exception was the Blue Jay that flew in front of Bernard Quetchenbach's windshield as he was driving the Beartooth Highway, east of the Top of the World Store on September 18th.

With only a handful of Gallatin County records, a **Brown Thrasher** is a rare find here. On the morning of September 16th Matt Keefer spotted the thrasher at the Indreland Audubon Wetland Preserve. The Brown Thrasher was a real treat for the many birders who got to see it that day and the next.

A Black-throated Blue Warbler was observed by Cherie Barth near Gallatin Gateway. Her sighing marks just the 3rd recorded sighting of this bird in Montana.
Photo by Aaron Marshall, courtesy of the Macauley Library.

The fishing access at Cameron Bridge was the warbler hotspot of the fall, with several out of range warblers being found there. First up was the **Chestnut-sided Warbler** that Dave Benes found there on August 22nd. A week later, Dave spotted a **Mourning Warbler** skulking through the undergrowth.

Birders were treated to a rare sighting in Southwest Montana– a Brown Thrasher was spotted this fall by Matt Keefer at the Indreland Audubon Wetland Preserve. Photo by Dave Benes.

Then on September 7th Davey Walters discovered a **Magnolia Warbler** at the same location.

On the morning of October 7th, while looking out the window of her mother's home near Gallatin Gateway, Cherie Barth was amazed to see a male **Black-throated Blue Warbler** moving through the nearby pine trees. The Black-throated Blue Warbler, Mourning Warbler, and Magnolia Warbler are southwestern Montana's third, fourth, and fifth records respectively, while the Chestnut-sided Warbler is nearly annual.

I have to mention the **super flight** of **Golden Eagles** and other raptors over the Bridger Bowl Hawkwatch site on October 10th. On that day the **hawk-watchers counted 290 Golden Eagles and 178 other raptors**, including the first two **Rough-legged Hawks** of the season. As far as I can tell, this is the largest single day flight at this site in 28 years. October 17, 1997 was a special day as 636 raptors were tallied, 596 of which were Golden Eagles!

Now that the raptor migration has passed for the most part, it's time to enjoy the late fall flights of waterfowl and nights filled with the calls of **Snow Geese** and **Tundra Swans** overhead.

SACAJAWEA AUDUBON SOCIETY

INDRELAND AUDUBON WETLAND PRESERVE
UPDATE: NOVEMBER 2025

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.

FALL EVENTS AT THE INDRELAND AUDUBON WETLAND PRESERVE

Participating in fall events at the Indreland Audubon Wetland Preserve helps build a deep sense of ownership and connection to our local wetlands. These activities gave members a chance to get outdoors, meet others, contribute to conservation, and enjoy a shared sense of community.

This fall, there were several opportunities to get involved:

Beaver Workshop

The season kicked off with a beautiful first day of fall as Claire Kirk, Beaver Conflict Resolution Technician with the National Wildlife Federation, led a workshop on mitigating beaver damage. Participants learned how to use pond leveler systems and tree wrapping techniques to promote coexistence with these industrious wetland engineers.

A fall midafternoon view from the Historic Railroad Berm at the Indreland Audubon Wetland Preserve. Photo by Brooke Everst.

Busy Beaver Rendezvous

Our final fall event was the Busy Beaver Rendezvous. As the wetland faces freeze-thaw cycles, snow cover, shifting hydrology, and active wildlife movement, autumn preparation is key to protecting infrastructure such as trails and viewing platforms. These efforts ensure the preserve is ready for the challenges of winter and spring.

A heartfelt thank-you to the Rendezvous Busy Beaver Crew for their incredible work: installing a footbridge, removing invasive plants, planting native seeds, updating signage, landscaping around the historic berm trail benches, and beginning the new trail of steps to the Kingfisher Pavilion from the service road.

The Indreland Busy Beaver Rendezvous was more than just a volunteer workday—it was a celebration of place, community, and nature. At its heart lies the Indreland Audubon Wetland Preserve: a living classroom and sanctuary. Those who attended didn't just help prepare the wetland for winter; they became part of its ongoing story—a story of work accomplished, friendships formed, nature observed, and a renewed sense of belonging to this special landscape.

Claire Kirk with busy beavers Allison Rolnile & Dave Dillon demonstrating tree wrapping. Photo by Loreene Reid

Fall Busy Beaver Workday and Rendezvous Volunteers:

Betsy Angwin, Allison Rognlie, Steve Mohler, Judy Mohler, Don Bishop, Dean Cristiani, Mica Murano, Cathy Stamm, Jennifer Abbott, Ed Abbott, Ken VanDeWalle, Quinn VanDeWalle, Cherie Barth, Kevin Cox, Deborah Pratt, Morgan Anderson, Frank Marchak, Loreene Reid, Connie Dillon, David Dillon, Janet Winnie, Anita Lusty, Jennifer Boles, Sarah Paulos, Jackie Stanley, Emily Stanley and, Alicia Orelup.

Montana Outdoor Science School Visit

Frank Marchak teaches the wonder of beavers to Montana Outdoor Science School students. Photo by Loreene Reid.

Sixteen students from the Montana Outdoor Science School explored the wetland to discover the types of soils found in wetland ecosystems and to learn about the beavers who make the Indreland Preserve their home.

World Wildlife Fund Workday

Fifty-three staff members from the World Wildlife Fund joined us for a morning of stewardship, helping with weed control and updating signage for our mitigation bank project. Their efforts made a big difference in maintaining the health and accessibility of the preserve.

ANOTHER RECORD-BREAKING SEASON FOR AMERICAN KESTRELS!

By Paulette Epple

A 24-day-old male Kestrel sporting a new shiny band. Photo: Paulette Epple.

It's another record-breaking year for our **Kestrel Nest Box Program** with **American Kestrels** nesting in 39 of our boxes! This is the most ever and a significant jump from the 18, 28, and 29 boxes used in the past three seasons. As an extra bonus, we had a **Northern Flicker** family occupy one of our boxes and successfully raise six young flickers.

Why are there so many more nesting American Kestrels using our boxes this year? It is known that Kestrels often return to the same areas where they were hatched and raised. This behavior is known as philopatry (from philo- 'liking" + Greek patra- "fatherland"). We must assume that as more American Kestrels are raised in our 4-county project area, they return to the same area and when they are unable to find suitable natural tree cavities, they utilize more of our boxes.

The nesting season was a roller-coaster of emotions for those of us checking the boxes. We were elated to find an all-time high number of boxes in use and, at first most of the boxes were full of fledging clutches of 4-5 chicks. But then we started experiencing disappointments as we found predators had gotten in and a box was empty, or eggs were infertile and failed to hatch, or in two cases we found dead chicks in the boxes. It was heartbreaking. In those instances, we had to assume that one of the adults (or both) must have perished and thus the

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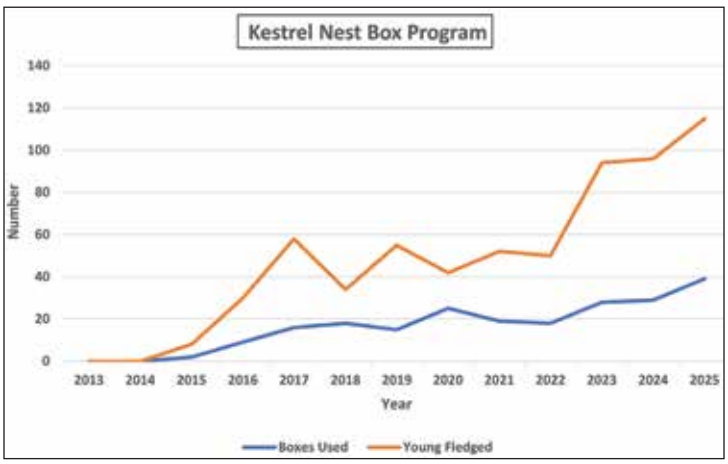

VOLUNTEERS MAKE KNOCK-OUT BURDOCK INITIATIVE A SUCCESS

By Paulette Epple

Sacajawea Audubon Society volunteers know that August is the month to cut down burdock, an invasive weed that entangles birds in its burs and causes them to perish. **This season our volunteers removed 1,700 lbs. of burdock plants and burs** from our trails, parks and neighborhoods, making the area safer for birds. Take a moment to notice and appreciate the lack of burdock as you walk our local trails through prime bird habitat. Our efforts since 2012 are paying off!

Adam Makhluf unloads burdock at the Bozeman Landfill Convenience Site.

We were joined this year in our efforts to control burdock by both the **Northeast Neighborhood Association** and the **Midtown Neighborhood Association**. Both groups organized major workdays and removed every burdock they could find in alleys and empty lots of their neighborhoods. It was a huge effort, and their contributions are greatly appreciated!

Sacajawea Audubon Society's "Knock Out Burdock" initiative is successful entirely due to the hard work and time commitment from our dedicated volunteers. So, from the birds and wildlife and your SAS Board members, **THANKS TO YOU ALL! :** Jennifer Abbott, John Ansley (Gallatin County Weed District), Susan Bilo, Noah ten Broek, Dan Carty, David Cole, Pat Cross, Jason Delmue, Kevin Ellison, Gretchen Engbretson, Andy Epple, Paulette Epple, Leo Freeman, Pamela Hainsworth, Jeb Himsl, Rebecca Himsl, Amy Hoitsma, Danielle Jones (Gallatin County Weed District), Peggy Kimmet, Ron Kimmet, Bill Klenn, Renee Lafond, Beth Madden, Jen Madgic, Adam Makhluf, Frank Marchak, Ashley Martens, Maev O'Connor, Michael O'Connor, Cole Orelup, Alicia Wilson Orelup, Peggy Osborne, John Parker, Gretchen Rupp, Vicki Saab, Emily Talago, Sandy Underwood, Janet Winnie, Allison Wronglie, and Elizabeth, Judda, Kristin, and Laura whose last names we did not catch. And again, **THANKS to the many members of the Northeast Neighborhood Association and the Midtown Neighborhood Association** that joined in this year's "Knock Out Burdock" efforts.

Watch for a chance to get involved and 'Adopt a Burdock Patch' next season!

THE BRIDGER HAWKWATCH: A FAMILY AFFAIR!

By Mikaela Gioia Howie, SAS Secretary

"As we headed north from Bozeman, Montana, the road began to wind between the narrow walls of Bridger Canyon. The elevation steadily increased, and we soon found ourselves driving through a valley bordered on the east by the Bangtail Hills and the Crazy Mountains, and on the west by the Bridger Mountains. Small farms bordered the road, and Black-billed Magpies flashed iridescent blue and white against extensive rows of bailed hay. Access roads into Gallatin National Forest began to appear, to lure outdoor enthusiasts into the draws, canyons, and streams. Our destination was the top of the ridge above Bridger Bowl Ski Area. We were looking forward to the opportunity to witness a phenomenon there that has been occurring annually for thousands of years..."

Sounds familiar, right? But this description of the Bridger Hawk watch was written in 1992 by Emily Teachout, an official observer during that season. Cut to 2025, 33 years later and Ruby Neatherlin, Emily's daughter is experiencing the same phenomenon on the top of the Bridger Mountain ridge! A true testament to the continuing success and importance of the Bridger Hawkwatch! I was able to speak to both of them about their shared experience a generation apart. **Here is a snapshot of our interview:**

What has been or was your greatest memory of being an official hawkwatcher?

Ruby: "On my first day, Oskar and Isabel (the other 2025 observers) were so excited and welcoming! The visitors really make the experience amazing…and meeting local people from SAS folks to Bozeman recreationists and past observers. As the season has gone on I have grown closer to the Bozeman community and now I feel like a veteran of the hawkwatch community!"

Emily: " The Bridger Hawkwatch was my first field job and it felt like a dream job. During my season, there was mostly just one observer with a lot of alone time. It was the most time I have ever gone without speaking to another human and I remember being so focused on the job. There was one day when it was socked-in with the clouds suspended all around. I was outside deciding whether or not it was going to be a weather day when all of sudden– clouds lifted and a **Prairie Falcon** appeared and hovered in a hole in the clouds about 100 feet above me! It looked down and seemed to stare right at me before it folded its wings and dropped all the way down the ridge. I often think about that moment. Seeing raptors so close up made the Bridger Hawkwatch really unique compared to experiences in the Goshutes and at Lucky Peak in Boise, Idaho."

Can you describe how hawk watching became a family affair for you?

Ruby: "Hearing my mother's stories about meeting a lot of important people in her life at hawkwatch sites always felt like a mysterious experience that she talked about with love and passion. As I got older and graduated, I felt like it was the exact thing that I wanted to do; spend time outside and observe an amazing biological process! To now know hawk-watching intimately after hearing about it throughout my life has just been so special! Another connection was just before I got the call from Steve Hoffman to join the 2025 Hawkwatch crew, my mother and I were passing through Bozeman and she pointed out the Bridger Mountains and recalled her experience. Steve reached out to me after being recommended by other hawk-watchers and had put it together that I was Emily's daughter…so it came full circle!"

Emily Teachout and Phil West, official Bridger Hawk-watchers in 1992, standing at Bridger Mountain ridge Hawk-watching site.

Emily: "Steve Hoffman hired me for the 1992 Bridger Hawkwatch and had also hired Ruby's father, Erik Neatherlin, in 1993. Erik and I had met at the Goshutes Hawkwatch so you could say that hawk-watching led to the creation of Ruby. Aaron Barnet, another fellow hawk-watcher, is my nephew and still spends a lot of time in the Goshutes. Hawk-watching is a true family shared experience and each generation adds to the hawkwatch lore. It's a Family Affair!"

Bridger Bowl ski shack pre-renovation in 1992.

THE BRIDGER HAWKWATCH: A FAMILY AFFAIR!

Biggest differences in your daily experiences as a Bridger hawkwatcher in 1992 and 2025?

Ruby Neatherlin 2nd generation Hawk-watcher at the Bridger site in 2025.

Ruby: "This year we have three observers and lots of visitors come up to the ridge, so there is probably less time alone. Bridger Bowl staff have been pretty involved as well."

Emily: "During my season, I was the lone observer the majority of the time except for during peak times. There was a lot of alone time. We were still staying in the old ridge shack used by the Bridger Bowl Ski Patrol and, since Bozeman was a smaller town, there were overall fewer visitors. Although, there was still alot of support and great people involved. It seems that Bridger Bowl is more involved these days. We also stopped our season about mid-October as winter weather had rolled in. I would like to honor that Steve Hoffman has been a constant thread throughout and his energy and passion is unmatched and is infectious among the crew year after year. He has played a major part in my family being connected to hawk-watching from myself to Erik and now Ruby!"

Best non-raptor wildlife observation while on the Bridger Ridge?

Ruby: "We recently observed a long-tailed weasel and watched the mountain goats maneuver across tilly and rocky areas."

Emily: One morning, when I was in the ski patrol shack, I opened the door and there were five mountain goats right outside the door!"

What would you like to share with future Hawk-watchers?

Ruby: "As a newcomer, the experience helped me fully understand the importance of collecting this data for the scientific world. Also, by doing Hawk-watching, year-after-year you are honoring the process of migration. You get to be one small piece of this greater data collection. All the details matter and it is all so important. I learned so much from the people I have met and from the repeat observers, I would tell future Hawk-watchers to stay vigilant."

Emily: "Just enjoy the moment! Stay vigilant, especially when it is slow, and keep scanning with eyes to the skies. I work as an endangered species biologist for USWS and have a great understanding of the value of long-term datasets. What each hawk watcher is doing is really contributing to the larger body of knowledge. What you're observing is important and valuable. There is no better way to monitor raptors so keep doing the good work!"

If you have followed along over the last 33 years, you would know that official Hawk-watchers have recorded a steady decline in most raptor species migrating over the Bridger Ridge. But, there are some stark differences that offer insight into how migration routes are changing and raptor species are faring. **Check out the rows in bold below to see the most striking trends between 1992 and 2025.** Changes in migration patterns are fueled by global climate change and changing weather patterns; while overall numbers are likely a reflection of how many nestlings were successfully fledged on breeding grounds to the north.

BY THE NUMBERS...

COUNT YEAR	1992	2025* **through Oct 16*
Total No. of Raptors	2426	2251
Total Observation Hours	244	309
Biggest Days	Oct 2nd (231) Oct 3rd (233)	Oct 9th (470) Oct 10th (241)
No. of Raptor Species	16	17
Golden Eagles	**1579**	**837**
Northern (American) Goshawk	**96**	**6**
Broad-winged Hawk	**2**	**51**
Rough-legged Hawk	10	2
Turkey Vulture	**0**	**23**
Osprey	2	1
Bald Eagle	95	36
Northern Harrier	13	58
Sharp-shinned Hawk	**248**	**414**
Coopers's Hawk	**175**	**386**
Swainson's Hawk	11	12
Ferruginous Hawk	1	8
Red-tailed Hawk	**67**	**158**
American Kestrel	**38**	**145**
Merlin	10	30
Peregrine Falcon	7	14
Prairie Falcon	14	17

RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP TODAY FOR 2026

For more than 50 years, Sacajawea Audubon Society has embraced the mission of protecting birds and the places they need here in the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem of Montana. Your membership and additional gifts fund a well-integrated program of science, local advocacy, environmental education, and places to enjoy nature. Your support makes it possible for us to stand up locally for birds and other wildlife and to defend a healthy habitat, and stable climate they—and we all—need.

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

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

Basic Membership $25

Supporting Membership $50

(Supporting = additional support for local conservation & education projects)

Student Membership $10

(College & High School Students)

Renew your membership for 2026 by filling out the membership form on the following page (*page 9*) or, join online at sacajaweaaudubon.org/for-members

SAS Local Membership gives you many benefits:

- **Protect** one of the last remaining large, nearly intact ecosystems in the northern temperate zone for birds and other wildlife.
- **Enhance** bird-friendly communities in Montana with our bird-friendly landscape program.
- **Contribute** to important environmental education programs about birds, wildlife and habitat for people of all ages and abilities.
- **Connect** with vital partnerships between other nonprofit environmental groups, citizens and local governments to shape the health of our community.
- **Advocate** for important environmental issues locally and regionally.
- **Participate** in activities at the Indreland Audubon Wetland Preserve environmental study area.

SAS Members Enjoy:

- **Free** monthly keynote speaker meetings.
- **Free** birding hotspots guide. Info on birding around the Gallatin Valley & beyond
- **Free** monthly member e-newsletter, so you'll always know what's going on. (published 9 times a year)
- **Member-only discounts** on educational courses, programs and special events.
- **Savings** on purchases and access to member-only sales.
- **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.
- **Free** guided birding field trips.

Sacajawea Audubon Society's local chapter membership does not include membership in the National Audubon Society. We are an independent 501(c)3 nonprofit organization (EIN 816012429) 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 the National Audubon Society, 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 the National Audubon Society for only $20 more (join online at: sacajaweaaudubon.org/give).

Thank you for renewing your membership TODAY!

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ANOTHER RECORD-BREAKING SEASON FOR AMERICAN KESTRELS!

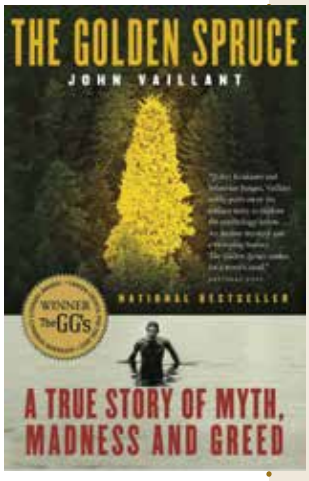
chicks died also. It's a tough life out there for American Kestrels as they can fall prey to larger raptors, get hit by cars, crash into reflective windows, or eat something contaminated with poison or pesticides. Although nine (22.5%) of our kestrel nests failed, we still had a record 30 successful kestrel nests this year.

And successful nests they were! **155 chicks fledged from our boxes, our highest number ever! We were able to band 107 of those chicks and 3 adults**. Our hope is that one or more of those will provide us with a band return someday to inform us as to where our birds migrate. Perhaps in future years we will tag a few birds with **Motus tags** and learn even more about their movements.

Although American Kestrel populations nation-wide are slowly declining, we are doing what we can to support American Kestrel populations by providing quality nesting sites for them. At least, in our part of Montana, it seems to be working. This wouldn't be possible without the support of all the volunteers who clean and monitor our boxes, the landowners who host the boxes, the Kestrel nest box sponsors who help to fund the program, and **Dennis and Alicia Ochs** who build new boxes for us every year as needed. Thank you all!

NOVEMBER BOOK CLUB NEWS

Join in on the discussion of **The Golden Spruce: A True Story of Myth, Madness, and Greed**, a book by American author John Vaillant, his first book (p. 2005). The book won the 2005 Governor General's Awards for non-fiction.



The book is based on a 2002 article Vaillant wrote for The New Yorker. While researching the book, Vaillant learned that the oral tradition surrounding the Golden Spruce is considered the property of various clans throughout the Pacific Northwest and requires permission to retell.

The book tells the story of Kiidk'yaas, or The Golden Spruce, which was a Sitka Spruce tree venerated by the Haida people. The tree itself contained a genetic mutation causing it to appear golden in color. It was felled in Haida Gwaii by forest engineer Grant Hadwin.

The Sydney Morning Herald described the book as, "A deep-reaching account of the clash between wilderness values, the voracious logging industry, white settlers, and first nations people."

SAS BOOK CLUB SCHEDULE

We meet on 3rd Wednesdays from Sept.-Nov. and Jan.-April at Hope Lutheran Church, Room 123 from 6:30 pm to 7:45 pm. You may also join us virtually. To join us online please notify Elisabeth Swanson (406) 570-8325, elsswa@gmail.com or Hilary Johnson (406) 599-1446, ralphhilary@gmail.com.

December 2025 - No Book Club meeting this month

January 2026 – Eavesdropping on Animals: What We Can Learn from Wildlife Conversations
By George Bumann (2024)

February 2026 – What an Owl Knows: The New Science of the World's Most Enigmatic Birds
By Jennifer Ackerman

SACAJAWEA AUDUBON SOCIETY MEMBERSHIP

Individual or Family | January – December 2026

- ❒ **Basic Membership** **$25**
- ❒ **Supporting Membership** **$50**
  (Supporting local conservation & education projects)
- ❒ **Student Membership** **$10**
  (College & High School Students)
- ❒ **Additional Donation $** _____
  - ❒ Bridger Raptor Study
  - ❒ Indreland-Audubon Wetland Preserve
  - ❒ Story Mill Park Bird Feeding Station
  - ❒ Wherever is Needed

Name(s): _____

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 the 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! include 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!

November '25 Newsletter

Choose your membership level above, and thank you for considering an additional donation.

Join or Renew for 2026 by filling out the membership form above or check out the many benefits of membershipand join online at sacajaweaudubon.org/membership.

SUPPORT THE BRIDGER MOUNTAIN RAPTOR PROJECT - 2026!

Enter to Win One of Two Bridger Bowl Season Ski Passes!

Sacajawea Audubon Society's important Bridger Mountain Raptor Project is entering its 34th year, and your support is more crucial than ever. To ensure the continuation of this vital monitoring program, we're excited to raffle off two Bridger Bowl Ski Area season passes, valued at $1230 each.

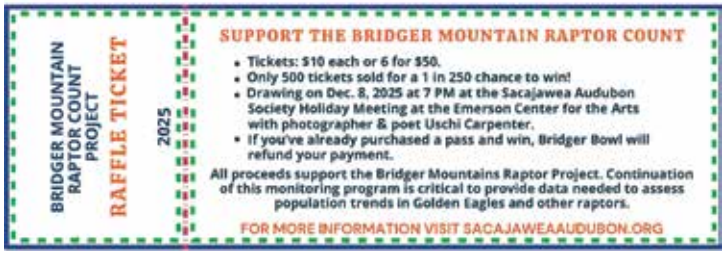
The data collected from this survey is essential for tracking population trends of Golden Eagles and other raptors, helping to shape conservation efforts. **The funds raised from this raffle will cover approximately one-quarter of the project's $20,000 budget.**

Tickets are just $10 each, or you can get 6 for $50!

Scanning the skies for migrating raptors from the ridge at Bridger Bowl.

Every ticket you purchase helps us better understand and safeguard the future of these majestic birds.

Get your raffle tickets today and support the ongoing work of the Bridger Mountain Raptor Project!



Two winners will each be awarded a 25-26 season pass to the legendary Bridger Bowl Ski Area.

A big thank you to Bridger Bowl Ski Area for their continued support of the Bridger Mountain Raptor Project.

Purchase raffle tickets at SAS program meetings and SAS Wildlife Trivia Nights at the Lockhorn Cider House, or request tickets online by scanning the QR code.

Two Winners will be drawn on December 8th, 2025 at the SAS Holiday Program at the Emerson Center for Arts and Culture.

SACAJAWEA AUDUBON SOCIETY FALL WILDLIFE WORKSHOP

WINTER TRACKING IN HYALITE CANYON

Winter provides the perfect conditions not only to learn what animals have passed through our area, but also to read the story of their passing. A trail is, in a very literal sense, an animal's story written in snow. In this field class, we will spend an afternoon exploring tracks and signs in Hyalite Canyon, in the Gallatin Range. You will not only learn how to identify the writer – but more importantly, how to read.

WORKSHOP DETAILS

Saturday, December 6, 1:00 pm - 4:00 pm

Locaton: Hyalite Canyon

Instructor: Cedar Mathers-Winn

Cost: SAS Members $40 • Non Members $65

Limited to 15 Participants

To register, visit:
sacajaweaaudubon.org/events/

The SAS Winter Tracking Workshop will be led by Cedar Mathers-Winn. He is a Nauturalist, Biologist and Educator.

Check out sacajaweaaudubon.org **to register for our March 2026 Master Naturalist Course also being taught by Cedar Mathers-Winn.**

PROGRAMS FROM OUR PARTNERS

Gallatin Valley Friends of the Sciences

The Story of Moose, Beavers and Willow in the Absaroka-Beartooth Wilderness

Wednesday, November 19, 2025, 6:30 pm
Bozeman Public Library - Community Room
Free to the public. Seating on a first-come, first-served basis.

How have beaver reintroduction and shifts in the moose population influenced riparian vegetation in the southern Absaroka-Beartooth Wilderness over the last 40 years? Rachel Dines, Ph.D. candidate in the MSU Department of Animal and Range Sciences, will discuss how these animals rely on riparian ecosystems for food, cover, and as travel corridors. Rachael will summarize her research examining long-term monitoring data for these riparian areas, followed by a question-and-answer period.

Sponsored by the **Gallatin Valley Friends of the Sciences** (www.gallatinscience.org) and co-sponsored by **Hopa Mountain**. This presentation is part of the **Science Inquiry Series** - Exploring cutting edge science topics, their latest developments, and their relevance to society.

MSU Chapter Ducks Unlimited

November Wildlife Trivia Night *with* Sacajawea Audubon Society

JOIN US on Tuesday, Nov. 18
Lockhorn Cider House—
21 S Wallace, Bozeman
5:30 PM- Social Hour
6:30 PM Trivia begins

Please visit sacajaweaaudubon.org or our **Facebook** page to find out the November Wildlife Trivia Theme.

Trivia is **FREE**, followed by a raffle. Enter to win a prize basket and benefit SAS's educational programs. **Raffle tickets are $5 each or 5 for $20.**

SAS Trivia Nights at Lockhorn Cider House are held on the 3rd Tuesday evening of every month in 2025!

SAS UPCOMING EVENTS

Mark Your Calendar
Tours, Classes and Events!

10 Nov: Sacajawea Audubon Society Monthly Program

18 Nov: Sacajawea Audubon Society Wildlife Trivia

19 Nov: Sacajawea Audubon Society Book Club

6 Dec: Winter Tracking Workshop

8 Dec: Sacajawea Audubon Society Special Holiday Program

17 Dec: Christmas Count Season Begins

To see additional details including locations, please visit: sacajaweaaudubon.org/events

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

SAS Holiday Program - December 8th at the Emerson Center

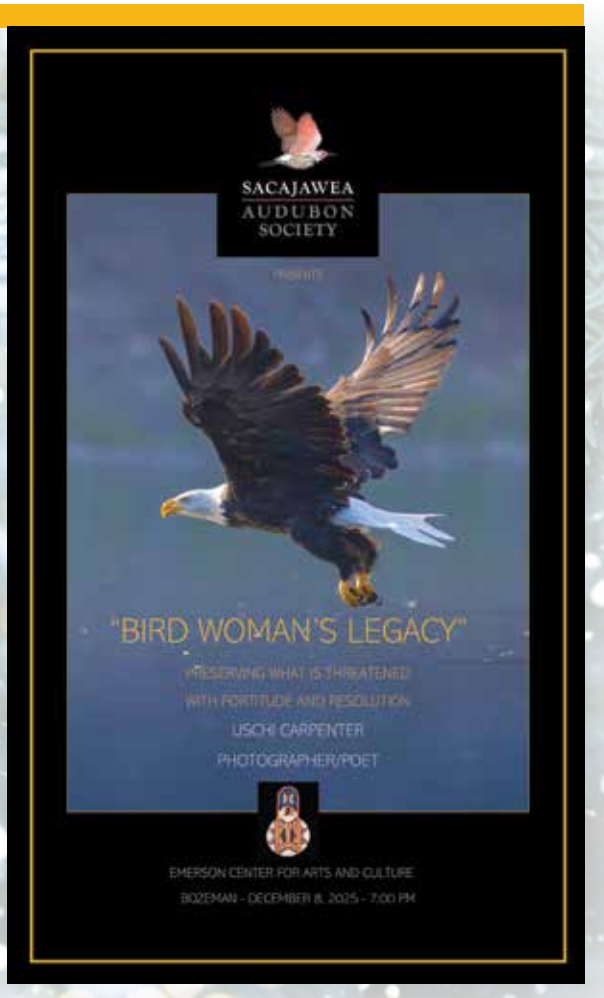
Bird Woman's Legacy – Preserving What is Threatened with Fortitude and Resolution

Uschi Carpenter, Missoula based Poet, Nature and Wildlife photographer has created a special presentation celebrating Sacajawea for SAS's annual holiday program.

We are thrilled that Uschi Carpenter will be presenting our holiday program **December 8th at the Emerson Center For Arts & Culture.** Uschi is an amazing photographer and heartfelt poet from Missoula. You may be familiar with Uschi's almost daily posts on the Montana Birding page on Facebook. She is presenting a unique program emphasizing the legacy of Sacajawea (*Bird Woman*). This event is free and open to the public.

The Holiday Party starts at 6:00 PM. Enjoy refreshments, mingle with friends and acquaint yourself with all the SAS programs that your membership fees, donations, and volunteer hours accomplish year-after-year. It is truly something to celebrate!

Open Call for Volunteers

Volunteers are needed to greet attendees, sell raffle tickets, collect donations and more. **If you wish to volunteer**, please email **Brooke Everest** at beverest124@gmail.com.

Thank you for helping us in this wonderful outreach opportunity!