



the Pelated Post

Newsletter of the Flathead Audubon Society

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CELEBRATING 30 YEARS OF FLATHEAD AUDUBON SOCIETY



Although the President's Column usually appears on an inside page of this newsletter, we believe that it is fitting this month, as Bob Lopp completes his term as FAS President, that he have this front page forum to educate us about the rich history of Audubon greats. We wish Bob the best in his new role as Past President. Dankeschön, Herr Lopp!



John James Audubon

As we celebrate the founding of FAS, we need to honor those who came before as well.

John James Audubon, 1785 – 1851, was for half a century the young country's dominant wildlife artist. His *Birds of America* with 435 life-size prints is still a standard against which 20th and 21st century bird artists such as Peterson and Sibley are measured. Although Audubon had no role in the organization that bears his name, there is a connection:

George Bird Grinnell, one of the founders of the early Audubon Society in the late 1800s, was tutored by Lucy Audubon, John James's widow. Knowing Audubon's reputation, Grinnell chose his name as the inspiration for the organization's earliest work to protect birds and their habitats. Today, the name Audubon remains synonymous with birds and bird conservation the world over. He was a person of legendary strength and endurance as well as a keen observer of birds and nature. Like his peers, he was an avid hunter, and he also had a deep appreciation and concern for conservation; in his later writings, he sounded the alarm about destruction of birds and habitats. It is fitting that today we carry his name and legacy into the future. George Bird Grinnell, editor of *Forest and Stream*, formed the first Audubon Society in 1886 with close to 40,000 initial members. Their numbers grew so quickly the following year that he had to disband the group.

Theodore Roosevelt at the urging of Audubon's early activists, established Pelican Island National Wildlife Refuge in 1903, the first land protected by the National Wildlife Refuge System.

(Celebrating 30 Years, continued on next page...)



MAY FLATHEAD AUDUBON CALENDAR

Monday, May 14, 2007: Flathead Audubon General Meeting & Potluck, see page 2 for details!

Monday, May 7, 2007: Flathead Audubon Board of Directors Meeting. 6 PM at 295 Third Ave East North, Kalispell (Jane Lopp & Associates Building) All are welcome.

Friday - Monday, June 1-4, 2007: Montana Audubon Bird Festival, Ennis, MT, see page 6

Friday - Sunday, June 22-24, 2007: Bitterroot Birding & Nature Festival, to register, call 406-777-5552 or go to www.bitterrootbirdfestival.com.

Saturday, August 25, 2007: Raptor Day Celebration, see page 6

Saturday, September 29, 2007: Owen Sowerwine Work Day, details in September newsletter
SUMMER FIELD TRIPS, see pages 7 & 8



(Celebrating, continued from page 1...)

Guy Bradley, one of the first Audubon wardens, was killed protecting wading birds in South Florida; his death became a rallying cry for conservationists.

Roger Tory Peterson set the standard for field guides; Peterson was hired as Audubon's education director and art editor for *Audubon* magazine.

Marie Aull's long life was dedicated to teaching others how to understand and appreciate nature. Her support led to the establishment of Aullwood, Audubon's first nature center in the Midwest, on the Ohio farm she had shared with her husband.

In 1939 *Audubon* commissioned **Carl Ko-ford** to study the California Condor, a declining species of which little was known. His groundbreaking research revealed much about the secretive birds, and led to the establishment of the 46,500-acre

Sespe Condor Sanctuary in the Los Padres National Forest north of Los Angeles.

Hazel Wolf, founder of more than 20 Audubon chapters in Washington state, received more than a dozen conservation medals, including the 1997 Audubon Medal. An active member of the Seattle Audubon Society, she founded a "Kids for the Environment" fund to continue her inspiring legacy.

As *Audubon* enters its second century, the conservation challenges we face are no less urgent than those that confronted our founders. Our mission remains as vital as it was one hundred years ago. Birds have long served as barometers for the overall health of our environment, and of our own quality of life and health. By helping to protect them, each of us, like the men and women who worked to outlaw plume hunting, can make a conservation difference. That is the Audubon legacy.

Flathead Audubon May Meeting & 

BETHLEHEM LUTHERAN CHURCH COMMUNITY ROOM

Flathead Audubon's May meeting begins with a potluck at 6 PM (no assignments, just bring your own table service and a dish to share). The church address is 603 South Main Street in Kalispell. There is a large parking lot behind the church on First Avenue East and the entry is near the lot.

We hold a Silent Auction during the potluck and encourage you to bring items to donate. Popular auction items from the past include bird and nature books, bird houses and feeders, used binoculars, bedding plants, nature art, guided rafting and birding trips, and homemade baked goods. It's a fun and funny fundraiser for our chapter.

Business meeting begins at 7 PM, with bird sightings, announcements, election of next year's officers and board, and vote on bylaw changes (see pages 9 and 10). All past FAS Presidents will be honored, as we celebrate our 30 years of history.

At some point in the festivities, the FAS mascot, the Duct Tape Duck, will migrate to its new nest. A masterpiece of duct work, The Duck selects a new host each year in a ticket drawing, and brings good fortune and many wise-quacks to the household who shelters him for the following year.

See you on May 14 for our last Flathead Audubon gathering until next September!

30 YEARS OF FLATHEAD AUDUBON PRESIDENTS

Dan Sullivan, Yellow Bay	1977	Leo Keane, Whitefish	1994-98
Rick Trembath, Bigfork	1978	Jim Rogers, Polson	1998-99
Wanda Jamieson, Kalispell	1979-80	Neal Brown, Bigfork	1999-2001
Dave Hudak, Bigfork	1981-83	Linda Winnie, Kila	2001-03
Lynn Kelly, Polson	1984-86	Linda de Kort, Kalispell	2001-05
Robin Magaddino, Bigfork	1986-90	Bob Lopp, Kalispell	2005-present
Brent Mitchell, Kalispell	1990-94		



Please join us at the May Potluck meeting to honor these people who have so ably guided Flathead Audubon Society through its first 30 years. It is these people who have shaped FAS into an effective organization, with ongoing programs that further nature and conservation education, bird population and habitat conservation, and conservation advocacy – and that provide opportunity for all to enjoy the fun and challenge of birding.

Most of the FAS Presidents will be present for this event, from the first President, Dan Sullivan, to the most recent President, newly elected at this meeting.

From Linda Winnie

LIFE IS A JOURNEY... NOT A DESTINATION. ENJOY THE TRIP!



May 2007 Program



EXPLORE THE CROWN OF THE CONTINENT MAPGUIDE PROJECT

National Geographic Society is creating a new type of community-based map in the Crown of the Continent region surrounding Waterton-Glacier International Peace Park. This Geotourism MapGuide will celebrate, support and sustain natural and cultural values in the Rocky Mountain border region of Montana, Alberta and British Columbia.

Our May 14 meeting will feature Steve Thompson, Associate Regional Director of the National Parks Conservation Association's Glacier Field Office. The National Parks Conservation Association (NPCA) is National Geographic's lead implementing partner for the MapGuide project and Steve is its Project Coordinator. Steve will explain the project and gather your nominations for inclusion on the map. Any place or event or experience that captures the region's beauty, diversity and unique feel and is appropriate to share with the larger public may be nominated. For example, wildlife viewing spots, recreational trails, local foods, historic districts, unique local businesses and places to stay, community festivals and traditions may be nominated.

The May 11 nominations deadline is being extended for Audubon members through May 15. Nominations can also be submitted on the internet at www.crownofthecontinent.net. The MapGuide is expected to be completed and publicity available in early 2008.

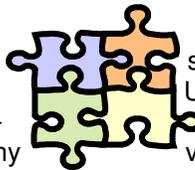
Steve began working with the NPCA in 2001 as its Glacier Program Manager. The NPCA mission is to protect national parks for current and future generations. It represents more than 335,000 members. Prior to moving to Montana in 1991, Steve was a national park ranger and newspaper reporter in several western states. He has a B.S. degree from Cornell University. Steve and his wife live and work in Whitefish.

Also at the May 11 meeting, Flathead Audubon will recognize Citizens For a Better Flathead with the year's final Conservation Achievement Recognition. Please join us at 6 PM at Bethlehem Lutheran Church for the annual potluck, silent auction and to learn about geotourism.

The World of the Future will be an ever more demanding struggle against the limitations of our Intelligence.
Norbert Wiener

New Education Coordinator Takes the Helm

Flathead Audubon's Education Committee is pleased to announce that we have hired Nancy Zapotocki (pronounced ZapoTOSki) as our new conservation educator. Nancy lives in the Many Lakes area near Kalispell with her husband, Matt Graves who is a Park Ranger at Glacier National Park, and their dog, Sitka. Nancy has been very involved in environmental education, most recently as the coordinator for the Kootenai Watershed Project. Nancy brings her enthusiasm and over 20 years of experience to the position, from working nationwide with community outreach, environmental education, watershed and natural resource planning, and environmental assessment. Her previous experience includes: Course Leader with the US Fish and Wildlife Service's National Conservation Training Center, Senior Watershed Planner on the Olympic Peninsula, Washington; U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service - habitat conservation and outreach education in Alaska and Oregon; and Park Ranger with the National Park Service.



Nancy has a B.S. in Environmental Resource Management from Pennsylvania State University and a M.A. in Biology with a concentration in Education from Appalachian State University, where she developed and field-tested an endangered species education curriculum for the US Fish and Wildlife Service. Her other part-time work is with The Glacier Institute. She is presently sharing an office space in the Northwest Montana Educational Curriculum Coop and can be reached by email at naz@centurytel.net. Nancy is looking forward to meeting and working with individuals, groups, and agencies in the Flathead and to exploring and educating about the natural wonders of the area.

We are trying to locate a laptop computer for Nancy to use; if any members know of a good deal on a laptop or if you just happen to have one that is needing some use, please let Nancy know.

Welcome, Nancy!

From Linda deKort

BIRD OF THE MONTH

By Jeannie Marcure

DENIZEN OF THE WATERWAYS

Since May is the month that many Montanans return to our beautiful lakes and streams for recreation, it seems appropriate that our featured bird this month is one seen almost exclusively on or near the water. My favorite form of water recreation involves paddling a small kayak with binoculars and camera close at hand. Not only is this activity good exercise, but it also offers some of my best bird watching and photography encounters of the year. Combine the quietness of a kayak with its ability to reach places otherwise unattainable and you have the perfect opportunity for some great birding! I might also add that part of my fascination with this particular bird is the fact that even after hundreds of opportunities; I've never been able to get a good photograph. Somewhat of a tease, he often lets me approach quite closely but then just as I focus for the perfect shot, he gives his raucous call and flies up the shoreline to a new perch. Something about his sassy demeanor as he watches me, tells me that he enjoys this little game we play!

Often seen perched jauntily on a branch hanging over the water, the Belted Kingfisher is found throughout most of North America and is fairly common here in the Flathead Valley. Two other species, the Ringed Kingfisher and the Green Kingfisher are also found in North America but these two, while common in the neotropics, are rarely seen beyond the Rio Grande area of southern Texas.

The Belted Kingfisher is stocky and short-legged with a large shaggy, crested head, and a long, thick bill. Both male and female have blue-gray heads, backs, wings and chest bands with white throats and bellies. The female has an additional rust colored belly band and is one of the few North American birds who is more colorful than her partner. Kingfishers emit a hoarse woody rattle usually while in flight or when disturbed from their fishing perch and this distinctive sound helps me spot many Kingfishers who would otherwise go unnoticed as they sit quietly in the waterside brush. You can hear this call on the net at:

[http://whatbird.wbu.com/obj/61/Belted Kingfisher.aspx](http://whatbird.wbu.com/obj/61/Belted%20Kingfisher.aspx)

According to Sibley, Belted Kingfishers eat mainly small fish that are captured under water but



they also consume amphibians, reptiles and aquatic insects. Since they hunt by sight, they need clear water and can be found on favorite perching spots along streams, rivers, ponds and lakes. Interestingly, Kingfishers are able to see well both in the air and under water, thanks to an egg-shaped lens in their eyes which allows them to focus in both environments. They hunt by sitting on an exposed branch or hovering over the water before plunging head first after the prey. After the catch, the Kingfisher kills its catch by either whipping it against a tree or dropping it on a stone. Unlike other fishing birds such as Eagles and Osprey, Belted Kingfishers have weak feet, suitable only for perching and the outer and middle toes on each foot are partially joined.

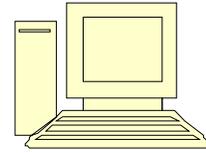
Belted Kingfishers are monogamous and pair for life. The pair bond is maintained through display and active defense of a territory of about 500 yards of waterside habitat. During courtship, the male conducts aerial pursuits of the female and following these pursuits, the pair engages in a courtship feeding during which the female sits upright with her beak in the air, wings dropped and quivering and gives a begging call. After the male presents her with food, the two mate.

Nesting occurs in burrows made on exposed vertical banks along or near waterways. Both sexes build this burrow using their heavy beaks to create a tunnel up to 2 inches wide and from 3 to 10 feet deep. The tunnel is usually gently angled upward, probably for drainage, and ends in a rounded nest chamber. No nesting materials are used and sanitation is ignored as the nesting area becomes littered with food remains and excrement. The five to seven white eggs are incubated by both sexes and hatch within 22-26 days. Both parents feed the young regurgitated prey until they are big enough to eat whole prey. After the babies fledge (18 to 28 days) the parents teach them to fish by dropping dead prey into the water for them to retrieve.

Belted Kingfishers are solitary except during breeding season and winter as far north as they can find open water. Migrants move at low altitudes, following rivers and shorelines until they reach suitable winter habitat. Returning to their breeding territories as soon as the ice leaves in the spring, they seem
(*Belted Kingfisher, continued on page 11*)

BOARD MEMBER VIEW: PAULA SMITH

FAS BOARD MEMBER
PUBLICITY CHAIR



www.flatheadaudubon.org

Wondering how you're going to **STAY IN TOUCH WITH FAS THIS SUMMER** when THE PILEATED POST and its hard-working co-editors go on vacation? Not to worry—it's as easy as typing in the above website address on an internet connection.

It was only one year ago that our Pileated Woodpecker logo went on-line. Now, after a year's experience with the new communications tool, the FAS board is working with Flockmaster John Kyle and site designer Hillary Smith on a few changes that we hope will make the website even more useful and informative to you. In the meantime, when you go on-line, here are some things to look for:

- The handsome *HOME* page with its changing seasonal landscape backdrop for our Pileated Woodpecker gives you direct access to news and information about the various areas in which FAS is concerned.
- The beautiful *Bird of the Month* photo leads to a wealth of ornithological information under *LOCAL BIRDS*. Soon you will also be able to find the annual local Christmas Bird Count statistics here as well. Under the *Bird of the Month* photo is a link to the PILEATED POST archive.
- The center section of the *HOME* page features an imminent event or issue to which FAS especially wants to draw your attention.
- Click on the red *EVENTS & FIELD TRIPS* bar above the three boxes on the left side of the page to read a complete description of each event and field trip scheduled by Leslie Kehoe throughout the summer months.
- Clicking on the narrower red bar below the column with the three boxes takes you to the *Calendar of Events* with abbreviated entries for both past and future events, field trips and meetings during the year.
- The information contained within the *EDUCATION* pages about *Educational Trunks & Materials*, *Citizen Science Projects*, *Scholarship Opportunities* and *Volunteer Opportunities* is sure to be of particular interest to teachers, parents and students.
- Within the *CONSERVATION* pages you can read about the citizen for whom the *Owen Sowerwine Natural Area* is named, *A Brief History*, *Information for Visitors*, *OSNA Map and OSNA Bird List*. I can practically guarantee that you'll be curious enough to visit OSNA, if you haven't yet been there.
- Check the *Current Conservation Issue* page periodically. This is where Lewis Young keeps the membership informed about a local issue of interest and where to send comments about that issue, if needed.
- *Resource Links* provides easy access to other local, state and national bird and conservation organizations, such as, Montana On-Line Birding, Montana Audubon, Montana Native Plant Society, National Audubon Society and American Bird Conservancy.
- The *JOIN & SUPPORT* page now offers the option of renewing your membership next fall via PayPal, an on-line service with which you may already be familiar.
- Also examine the *Volunteer Opportunities* page to see if any FAS committee needs appeal to you. Maybe you'd like to volunteer for the OSNA Monitoring Program that begins this summer?
- You can research *FAS Bylaws and Board Meeting Minutes* on the *ABOUT US* page. Contact addresses for FAS officers and committee chairs will also be soon located on this page.

Send us your comments and ideas. We hope you will enjoy exploring www.flatheadaudubon.org!



Bird Pictures Needed - Can you help?

The FAS website is in need of "spiffing up." Our "Flockmaster" is looking for more digital pictures that are fairly simple – for example, one or two birds, a flower or tree, simple background, and of web quality. If you are willing to provide some pictures for use on our website, please email them to John Kyle, at jkyle@fastmail.us. Pictures you submit may have to be cropped to fit size requirements and context.



IDEAS FOR SUMMER FUN



Montana Audubon Bird Festival

The state Bird Festival is held in Ennis this year and includes numerous field trips, presentations, and workshops, as well as entertainment, social events, silent auction, raffle, and great food. Activities for children and families are part of the mix as well. By now, all Flathead Audubon members should have received a registration brochure by mail. For details, visit www.mtaudubon.org or call (406) 444-3949.

Native Plant Society Field Trips

The Flathead Chapter of the Native Plant Society offers a variety of summer field trips that may be of interest to Flathead Audubon members. Check the Chapter's website, www.umt.edu/mnps/, for full information. Some trips of possible interest to birders are:



Thursday, May 17: **Columbia Mountain Field Trip**. Leader: Ecologist Tara Carolin, 888-7919 or 755-9412
 Saturday, May 26: **Johnson Mountain Terraces Field Trip**. Leaders: Mary and Gary Sloan, 862-3360
 Wednesday, June 6: **Native Plant Garden Tour**. Leader: Bill McClaren, 257-2540 or mccl@bresnan.net

Flathead Forestry Expo



The Family Forestry Expo is quickly approaching on Saturday and Sunday, May 12 and 13. Each year, Flathead Audubon hosts an exhibit that introduces the general public to the wonder of birds and birding. We invite all Flathead Audubon members to help out. It would require just a couple of hours of your time on either day but especially on Saturday, then you could enjoy the rest of the Expo. If you would like to volunteer to help out, contact Ansley Ford at 857-6788. Audubon and the birds thank you in advance.



Raptor Day Celebration

Flathead Audubon collaborates with MT Fish, Wildlife & Parks' Lone Pine State Park in a special celebration honoring Rod Ash, an inspirational FAS member who passed away last November. Rod's favorite birds were raptors. Mark August 25 on your calendar for a day of bird walks, organization booths, and presentations on falconry and Montana owl adaptations, complete with live birds. Watch and listen for publicity in newspapers, radio and TV. The celebration will be held at Lone Pine, and volunteers are needed to help with booths, traffic flow, set up and baking for food booths. If you would like to help out, please contact Melissa Sladek at 755-2706 or mssladek@mt.gov.



Glacier Institute Courses of Interest to Birders



There are several fee based classes offered this summer of interest to Flathead Audubon members. The Glacier Institute is a private nonprofit organization that provides hands-on, field-based educational adventures to people from all over the world in nature's wildest places. For more information, contact The Glacier Institute at 755-1211 or www.glacierinstitute.org.

- **Birding by Ear**. Leader: Denny Olson, M.S., a.k.a. "Crittterman," June 15-17
- **Glacier's Birds of Prey**. Leader: Dave Shea, M.S., June 20-21
- **Birding Glacier's West Side: Songbirds, Swifts and Swallows**. Leader: Lou Bruno, B.A., June 22-23
- **The "Uncommon" Loon**. Leader: Denny Olson, M.S., a.k.a. "Crittterman," June 23-24
- **Birding Glacier's East Side: Peaks to Prairies**. Leader: Lou Bruno, B.A., June 24
- **Birding and Kayaking the Owen Sowerwine**. Leader: Dan Casey, M.S., June 27





2007 SUMMER FIELD TRIPS

SATURDAY, MAY 12: INTERNATIONAL MIGRATORY BIRD DAY AT THE NATIONAL BISON RANGE. The National Bison Range near Moiese celebrates this day in a big way with the opening of the Red Sleep Mountain drive, which travels through a variety of habitats and is a wonderful place to see a broad spectrum of birds, from Yellow Warblers to Mountain Bluebirds, from Western Meadowlarks to Bald Eagles. There are several field trips scheduled throughout the day focusing on the Range's birds. Bluebird expert Erv Davis will give a presentation about bluebird habitat and nest boxes and wildlife photographer Donald Jones will attend. For information and field trip sign up, contact Pat Jamieson, 644-2211, Ext. 207.



SATURDAY, MAY 12: SPRING LOON CENSUS DAY. The Montana Loon Society and the Montana Common Loon Working Group need volunteers to help look for and count loons on the lakes throughout north-west Montana on this day. Please contact Gael Bissell at 755-8706 if you would like to volunteer.



Paul Higgins

SUNDAY, MAY 13: SEARCHING FOR HARLEQUIN DUCKS AND DIPPERS IN GLACIER NATIONAL PARK. Join John Ashley for a Mother's Day walk in Glacier National Park in search of one of Montana's most enigmatic birds, the Harlequin Duck. These rare ducks return from the Pacific coast year after year to the streams of their birth, where they breed.

There will be short easy walks all morning. A Glacier National Park entrance fee or pass is required. The number of participants is limited to minimize disturbance to these shy ducks. Contact John at 871-3798 or ashley@mail.bigsky.net to sign up for the trip.

SATURDAY, MAY 19: SPRING LOON DAY IN GLACIER NATIONAL PARK. Volunteers with some birding experience or previous training are needed to look for and count the loons of Glacier National Park. Please call Jami Belt at 888-7986 to sign up for a great day in the field with the loons.

SATURDAY AND SUNDAY, MAY 19 & 20: THE GLACIER INSTITUTE VOLUNTEER WORK WEEKEND. Help The Glacier Institute prepare for its 22nd year of educational activities. Volunteers will clean, paint, cut and plant trees, and do light carpentry at the Field Camp in the Park and the Big Creek Outdoor Education Center. Contact The Glacier Institute at 755-1211 or register@glacierinstitute.org.



SUNDAY, MAY 27: A TOUR OF THE MISSION VALLEY. Come with FAS to the Mission Valley for some exceptional spring bird watching; we will drive over the Red Sleep Mountain Drive to look for warblers, vireos and sparrows on the National Bison Range. We may find Rock Wrens or Short-eared Owls or a swift Prairie Falcon. (Entrance fee to the National Bison Range is \$4 per vehicle.) We will also spend some time at the Ninepipe National Wildlife Refuge. Meet at Park n' Ride at the intersection of Hwys 93 and 82 near Somers at 6AM. For more information, please call Leslie Kehoe in the evenings at 837-4467.



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SATURDAY, JUNE 2: BIRDING THE NORTH FORK IN GLACIER NATIONAL PARK. Meet at the Alberta Visitor Center in West Glacier at 6 AM and return by 2 PM. This trip will focus on neotropical migrants and birds that specialize in recently burned areas. We will visit Fish Creek campground to look for Harlequin Ducks and scan the cottonwoods for vireos and warblers. Then we will head up the inside North Fork Road in search of Black-backed Woodpeckers, Olive-sided Flycatchers, Spruce Grouse, Northern Hawk Owls and perhaps even the elusive LeConte's Sparrow. The trip is limited to 20 participants and a Glacier National Park entrance fee or Park pass is required. Sign up for the trip with Steve Gniadek at 888-7833.

SATURDAY, JUNE 9: LOST TRAIL NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE. Lost Trail, located in beautiful Pleasant Valley is a wonderful place to see grassland and riparian birds. The road wanders through wet meadows where Wilson's Snipe, Brewer's Blackbirds and Vesper Sparrows sit on fence posts and songs of warblers and flycatchers come from thickets. Large shallow Dahl Lake has breeding populations of Black Terns, Ruddy Ducks, Red-necked, Pied-billed, Horned and Eared Grebes and Sandhill Cranes. We may see Golden and Bald Eagles, as both species breed here. Meet at Fish, Wildlife and Parks building in Kalispell at 6 AM for an exciting day in one of the newest jewels in our National Wildlife Refuge system. Contact John Hughes at 261-2506 to sign up or for more information.





2007 SUMMER FIELD TRIPS

SUNDAY, JUNE 17: WARBLERS, VIREOS AND FLYCATCHERS ON THE ROAD TO TALLY LAKE. Winding through a wide variety of habitats, we will find all kinds of neotropical migrants along this road. Every species of warbler that migrates to NW Montana can be found on these US Forest Service lands near Tally Lake. This trip will focus on both bird identification and birding by ear. Meet at the Fish, Wildlife and Parks building on Meridian Road in Kalispell at 6 AM and return by 1 PM. Please call Leslie Kehoe at 837-4467 in the evenings to sign up for the trip.



Google Images

SATURDAY, JUNE 23: SPEND A MORNING WITH THE LOONS. This tour takes us to lakes where Common Loons have previously nested, including Tally, Blanchard and Little Stillwater Lakes. We may be able to see loon families with chicks. The Loon Ranger will be leading this 3 hour trip. Meet at the Fish, Wildlife and Parks building on Meridian Road in Kalispell at 8:30 AM and return by noon. Call 755-8706 to sign up.



SATURDAY, JUNE 23: A MORNING OF BEGINNING BIRDING FOR ALL AGES AT LAWRENCE PARK IN KALISPELL. Our morning of birding will be spent in Lawrence Park at the north end of Main St. in Kalispell, where we may see Wood Ducks, Lazuli Buntings, Black-chinned Hummingbirds and Black-headed Grosbeaks. We will focus on the basics of bird watching by showing you how use your binoculars effectively and teaching you how to identify some common birds from field marks, calls and other clues. The walking is easy. Meet at the pavilion in Lawrence Park at 8 AM. Call Bob Lopp at 257-6886 for more information.



SUNDAY, JULY 14: HIGH COUNTRY BIRDING IN GLACIER NATIONAL PARK. Have you ever wanted to see a Boreal chickadee or maybe a White-tailed Ptarmigan? This may be your chance to find one of these special birds. This trip involves a moderately strenuous hike to Piegan Pass, enjoying the birds and the wildflowers on the way. We may also see American Pipits and Gray-crowned Rosy Finches. Meet at Apgar Visitor Center at 6 AM and car pool to the trailhead. A Glacier National Park entrance fee or a Park Pass is required; trip is limited to 15 participants. To sign up please call Bruce Tannehill at 862-4548.



SATURDAY, JULY 21: MONTANA LOON DAY. The Montana Loon Society and the Montana Common Loon Working Group need volunteers to help look for and count loons on the lakes in northwest Montana. A day spent watching the loons can add valuable data to the ongoing study of these wonderful birds. To volunteer, contact one of the following: for areas north of Kalispell, Amy Jacobs at 863-5444; for areas west of Kalispell, Gael Bissell at 755-8706; for southern Flathead Lake and Mission Valley, Brett Gullott at 883-2888, Ext. 7292; for the Libby area, Glen Gill at 295-7495; for the Swan Valley, Jane Ingebretson at 837-5081; for the Eureka area, Christi Ferruzzi at 882-4451; for Glacier National Park, Jami Belt at 888-7986.



SUNDAY, JULY 22: FLOAT THE FLATHEAD RIVER WITH THE CASEYS. Join Dan and Susannah Casey for a canoe trip from the Presentine Bar Fishing Access to Leisure Island in Kalispell. This beginner level float is an easy six hours on the river (no whitewater) through a variety of riparian habitats. Bring canoe, lifejackets (one for each person), lunch and raingear. Meet at 9 AM at K-Mart parking lot. Please RSVP to Dan or Susannah at 857-3143.



SUNDAY, AUGUST 12: MIGRANT SHOREBIRDS IN THE FLATHEAD VALLEY: This is a unique opportunity to see shorebirds including dowitchers, phalaropes, yellowlegs and sandpipers beginning their migration southward from the Arctic. We may visit various locations depending on where the migrants may be found. Meet at the Tidyman's parking lot at 9 AM. Please RSVP to Dan Casey at 857-3143.

All Flathead Audubon Field Trips are free of charge and open to the public. Field trips are also listed on Flathead Audubon's website: www.flatheadaudubon.org.



Slate of Nominees for FAS Board Positions 2007

by Linda de Kort, Nominations Committee Chair

The nominations committee is delighted to present a rich slate of nominees. The election of officers and board members will take place at the Annual Meeting following the Potluck on May 14th. We are grateful that several board members and officers have agreed to continue on the board; we are also pleased to introduce new nominees to this slate.

Mike Fanning has graciously accepted the nomination for President. Mike has served on the Audubon Board for 7 years and is the current Vice President. Mike has coordinated the Sunflower Seed Sales, is Membership Chair and he and his wife Jill help with the pick up and mailing of the Pileated Post. Despite his myriad commitments to FAS, he still says that he is a self-proclaimed hedonist and as soon as the snow flies in the winter, Mike and Jill pursue their skiing pleasures on Big Mountain. Mike has spent most of his career managing technical consultants and doing consulting work. We are grateful that he "came out of retirement" to serve as President of FAS for a two year term.

Bob Lee, our nominee for Vice President, is also no stranger to the FAS board. Bob has served on the board since 2003; among the responsibilities he has carried are Education Committee member, Pileated Post Editor, and Beauty of Birds Coordinator. Bob is a Fisheries Biologist by vocation and presently a carpenter by trade. He is very active in Flathead Search and Rescue. Thanks, Bob, for continuing to share your expertise and hard work.

The committee is nominating four candidates for the Board of Directors. Each Director serves a three year term.

Ansley Ford has served on the FAS Board for the last three years and has agreed to stand for reelection. Ansley and her husband Rob are both exemplary public school educators in the valley. Ansley teaches third grade at Lakeside School and is currently chair of the FAS Education Committee. As chair of this active committee, Ansley has forged partnerships with Lone Pine State Park, the County Education Coop and the Flathead Core Group. She is presently teaching our Beauty of Birds class and assisted with the teacher workshop in April. She has also just completed co-authoring her first children's book and is working on her master's degree in her spare time.

Marcy Mahr has accepted a nomination to the FAS board for a three year term. Marcy accepted a one year position last year and has already made significant contributions to FAS. Marcy lives in Kila with her husband Kip Drobish and daughter Kolibri (hummingbird!). They live on Raven Ridge in a straw bale, solar-powered home they built a few years ago. Many families in the Flathead Valley belong to their community supported agriculture program (CSA), receiving nutritious, organic produce throughout the summer. Marcy also works professionally as a conservation biologist, most recently contributing scientific research to the Yellowstone to Yukon Conservation Initiative (Y2Y). Marcy's interest in birds in the Flathead was really piqued a few years ago when Y2Y's scientific analysis showed our area as a bright 'hotspot' for bird biodiversity. Marcy will continue to add great depth and insight to our FAS board.

Mary Nelesen is a new addition to the FAS family. Mary and her husband Tom are Wisconsin natives who moved to Flathead Valley in 2004. Mary was active for many years in the Madison Audubon Chapter and attended several National Audubon conventions in Washington, Florida and D.C. She participated in the annual bird seed sale, which was the major fund raiser of the year. Mary has contributed to many research projects, including a frog survey, annual crane count and Wisconsin Breeding Bird Atlas. Mary has five children, seven grandchildren and enjoys hiking, camping, gardening, skiing, bridge, mah jongg and of course, birding.

Rod McIver (pronounced McKeever) has accepted a nomination as FAS director. Rod moved to the Flathead in 1998. Rod is a native of coastal South Carolina, though he has spent many years in Misoula as a smoke jumper and graduate student. Rod also served in Viet Nam as a Marine Corps infantry officer. He has also worked as a science teacher, logger, rancher, retailer, and Christmas tree farmer. Rod is now semi-retired running a portable sawmill business in the Helena Flats area. His current interests are his children and grandchild, gardening, hiking, canoeing, skiing and natural history. Rod's other public service commitments include: board member of Bob Marshall Wilderness Foundation, newly elected board member of Citizens for a Better Flathead, and volunteer with the Helena Flats Land Use Committee. Rod's insights and involvements will be very valuable to the FAS board.

The Nominations Committee encourages all members to attend the Annual meeting on May 14th and vote for these important positions.

PROPOSED CHANGES IN BYLAWS TO BE VOTED ON

The following proposed changes in the Bylaws of the Flathead Audubon Society (FAS) will be presented to the FAS membership for approval at the May 14 meeting. All members present at the meeting will be eligible to vote on this proposal.

The new wording that would be inserted into the Bylaws by these proposed changes is presented in italics below. The word "SOCIETY" below refers to the Flathead Audubon Society. The current Bylaws are available on the FAS website (flatheadaudubon.org), or may be obtained by contacting Linda Winnie (755-1406, lindawin@centurytel.net).

1. Changes A and B below are needed to **allow for membership in FAS via Local Chapter Membership.**

A. Change the title of Article I - Membership so it applies only to membership via National Audubon membership:

"Article I – Membership via National Audubon Membership."

B. Add a new Article II:

"Article II – Membership via Local Chapter Membership

Section 1. Any person interested in the purposes and objectives of this SOCIETY is eligible to apply for Local Chapter Membership.

Section 2. There is only one class of Local Chapter Membership, available equally to individuals, families, or groups.

Section 3. The membership dues for Local Chapter Membership shall be as established by this SOCIETY.

Section 4. All Local Chapter Members shall enjoy all the rights and privileges accorded to the members of this SOCIETY.

Section 5. Each Local Chapter Member shall have the right to cast one vote at the annual meeting and at any regular or special meeting of members on any motion that may properly be brought before such meeting, including the election of officers and directors.

Section 6. Local Chapter Membership dues shall be payable at the time set by the Membership Chair of this SOCIETY.

Section 7. Should renewal of Local Chapter Membership dues not be paid within three months after due date, a member so in default shall be dropped forthwith from the rolls."

2. Renumber original Articles II through XI to become "Articles III through XII."

3. Changes A and B below are needed to **allow active Committee Chairs to participate fully in Board activities** by allowing the Board to appoint interested Committee Chairs to the Board of Directors for a 1-year term.

A. Add a new Section 4 to Article IV – Board of Directors (originally Article III)

"Section 4. The Board may elect to membership on the Board of Directors for a one-year term any current Committee Chair who agrees to serve as a member of the Board."

B. Renumber original Sections 4 through 7 of this Article to become "Sections 5 through 8."

4. Section 3 of Article VII – Other Committees (originally Article VI) talks about a "Publications Committee." We now call this the "Newsletter Committee." We need to **change the name of the Committee to agree with current use.**

Replace the clause "Publications Committee" of Article VII, Section 3 with:

"Newsletter Committee. The Newsletter Committee shall publish, at least six times a year, a bulletin or newsletter for the members of the SOCIETY and shall prepare any other publications helpful to the SOCIETY'S program."

Submitted by Linda Winnie

*The amount of nectar a single bee collects in its lifetime produces about
1 teaspoon of honey.*



RECYCLING FOR AUDUBON

Auduboners had a good year for recycling. Although our total pounds recycled was down a bit from last year, we think that's actually a good sign that we're consuming less, shopping with an eye toward less packaging, and reusing containers. One thing we've definitely noticed is the increase in the number of donors to the Recycling Wagon. Our unofficial guess is that we received recyclables from about triple the number of donors as we had two years ago when we started the program. Add to that the members who take their donations directly to the recycling center and together we've done a lot for Flathead Valley's landfill, and Flathead Audubon's treasury. Thanks to all of you who do your part!

The Recycling Wagon will be at the May meeting at Bethlehem Lutheran Church. We will set up early (5:15 PM), so that you can unload your recyclables and get inside to visit and bid on the silent

auction items before the potluck starts. Bring as much as you can; it's that much less that you have to take to the recycling center yourself this summer.

The Winds of Change are blowing on the recycling program, too. We are looking for Replacement Recyclers. We have received the "go-ahead" for a good-sized logging project on our property and the Recycling Wagon is being pressed into service as part of the operation. Therefore, we will not have a trailer available to haul recyclables monthly for FAS. We would love to "train" another volunteer, though. The requirements are simple - it takes a standard-sized pickup with an open box, or you can pull a hauling trailer like we do. You need to come half an hour before each meeting starts and wear weather appropriate clothes. Recyclables do not scratch up your paint job, and no, you don't get dirty. Interested? Call us (756-8130) and talk it over. We'll make sure you have plenty of help and support.

Brent & Kay Mitchell

Owl Myths & Legends

Brittany: an Owl seen on the way to the harvest is the sign of a good yield.

New Mexico: the hooting of Owls warns of the coming of witches.

U.S.A: if you hear an Owl-cry you must return the call, or else take off an item of clothing and put it on again inside-out.



Just the Bear Facts



Along with your usual spring raking, digging, pruning, and planting, be sure to create some "non-bear habitat" around your home. This is the time of year to empty and clean your bird feeders, take down your suet, and clean out and secure your gar-

bage cans. Make sure your hummingbird feeders will hang out of a bear's reach (at least 10 feet up and 4 feet out from any branch), and bring your pet and horse food inside a building. You may save a bear's life by not providing attractants. This is all you want to see of a bear in your yard!



(Belted Kingfisher, continued from page 4...)

to return to their favorite tactical positions every year. Some good places to find Belted Kingfishers locally are:

- The boat access at Leisure Lane—look in the brush just across the river or listen for the call
- The bridge across Ashley Creek just south of Kalispell on Airport road—check the power line and the brush near the creek.
- The bridge area on Old Hwy 93 near Dayton—check the brush on the lakeside and also the dock area that belongs to the winery
- Highway 93 south of Ronan where Post Creek crosses the highway—check the power lines and brush near the creek

As you return to your favorite lakes and rivers this summer, listen for the raucous call of the Belted Kingfisher and watch the waterside shrubbery and hopefully you'll catch a glimpse of this interesting little bird. Be sure to take your binoculars and a camera and remember that this is breeding season so be careful not to disturb any nesting birds or waterfowl. Birds disturbed during nesting often abandon their nests and fail to reproduce.



VOLUNTEER MONITORING PROGRAM FOR OSNA

The Flathead Audubon's Owen Sowerwine Committee, with approval from the FAS Board of Directors, has started a new Volunteer Monitoring Program for the Owen Sowerwine Natural Area (OSNA). The purpose of the program is to ensure that at least one monitoring visit to OSNA is made on behalf of Flathead Audubon roughly every 2 weeks for the months of March through November.

Volunteer monitors are the eyes and ears, and the ambassadors, of Flathead Audubon. Monitors assess maintenance needs, and check for and document violations of the visitor rules. They may talk with OSNA visitors to find out how the Natural Area is being used, and provide feedback on the concerns, comments and suggestions of OSNA visitors and neighbors.

Each monitoring period is half a month long. Monitors are responsible for visiting OSNA at least once during their monitoring period, including a weekend visit if possible. Monitors are provided with a checklist indicating what should be covered on their visit, and are encouraged to use a camera to document their observations. A monitoring visit is expected to take from 1½ to 2 hours.

At the end of each monitoring period, the completed checklist(s) and any documenting photos are sent to Brent Mitchell, Co-Chair of the Owen Sowerwine Committee.

Members of the Committee and the Board are conducting a trial run of the program by making the monitoring visits for the first several months. After that, the Program will be open to all FAS members. Monitoring visits are a great way for members to get better acquainted with OSNA, and also give members more opportunity to participate in Audubon's management of the Natural Area.

Some of the monitoring periods in August through November of 2007 are still not spoken for. If you want to volunteer for one of these periods, contact Brent Mitchell (756-8130, bkmitch@centurytel.net).

SAVE THE DAY!

Owen Sowerwine/Global Volunteer Work Day will be **September 29**.
Details in the September Pileated Post!



Freezout Lake Delivers Again

There are a few things you can count on during the last weekend in March along the Rocky Mountain Front. Wind, snow squalls, and waves and waves of white geese. Dan and Susannah Casey once again led an intrepid group of Flathead Auduboners to Freezout Lake March 31st and April 1st for the annual spectacle of the spring Snow Goose migration. We had a caravan of 6 cars on the way over, and met several more in Choteau. As usual, predictions were that the migration had peaked earlier, so we were pleased to see about 30,000 leaving the lake to feed on Saturday afternoon. Luckily, we were able to get directly under the departing flocks, easily spotting the occasional "Blue Goose" and smaller Ross's Geese as they passed overhead. Following them to the fields, we found a single feeding group of more than 15,000 that came to within 30 yards of our cars, allowing good comparisons of Snow and Ross's Geese. The sounds from such a flock are as impressive as the waves of white moving across the stubble!

After an evening of NCAA basketball and Choteau nightlife, our group was up before dawn to catch the morning flyout. Again we found the flocks near the highway, and absorbed the sights and sounds before a hearty breakfast in town. But the biggest surprise awaited us, when just before noon we watched flock after flock coming in to the south end of lake. They came in waves from beyond the

horizon, "dumping" the air from their wings and barking to each other as they dropped in directly over our heads. At least 100,000 birds accumulated nearby before the show was over, the beginning of a late season surge that topped out at over 150,000 birds two days later! The weekend offered lots of ducks, darting harriers, soaring pelicans, and a few early Greater Yellowlegs in addition to the main event.

Freezout Lake, a low-lying basin that traditionally flooded in wet springs and collected irrigation water, was acquired with sportsmen's dollars starting in 1953, and has been managed as a nesting area for waterfowl and upland game, and as a popular hunting area ever since. It has also been recognized as one of the 500 most important bird areas in the United States by the American Bird Conservancy.

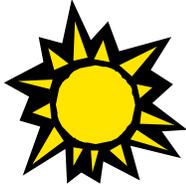
The geese traditionally stop over at Freezout on their migration from the central valley of California to their breeding areas in the arctic, attracted by the combination of large, shallow wetlands and expanses of barley fields in which to feed. The community of Choteau has realized and acknowledged the economic benefits that the growing popularity of this event represents. At most times over the weekend, 50-100 people from all over the state were there following the flocks. So, mark your calendars now for the last weekend in March, 2008. The geese will be there. Will you? Dan Casey, Trip Leader



Support Local Agriculture at Valley Farmers' Markets

When it comes to taste and nutrition, nothing beats fresh produce. And by buying your bedding plants, fruits and vegetables at the local Farmers' Markets, you support the role of agricultural lands in our local economy. A diversity of cottage industries provide locally-made arts, crafts, and other items at these markets. These venues offer a wonderful chance to network with friends and neighbors, and build community connections.

Another option is to subscribe to our Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) shareholder co-ops; as of this writing, there were still subscriptions available for these weekly (May-October) organic produce partnerships, with pick-up points in Kalispell, Bigfork and Whitefish. All three are also among the many producers selling directly at the Farmers' Markets.



Bigfork Farmers' Market

Bigfork Schools Bus Lot (Grand Avenue)
June 13th through September
Wednesdays, (10:00am-2:00pm) until school resumes
(4:00-6:00 pm) in September after school resumes
Bruce Solberg: 837-5888

Kalispell Farmers' Market

Center St. & 5th Ave. West
April 21st to October 20th
Saturdays, 9:00am-12:30pm
Beverly Medved: 752-3350

Polson Farmers' Market

Masonic Temple
May 11th to mid-October
Tuesday & Fridays, 9:00am-1:00pm
Gladyce Drebes: 675-2855



Whitefish Farmers' Market

Pin & Cue (Bowling Alley) Parking Lot
May through September
Thursdays, 4:00pm-6:30pm
Joanna Barnes: 862-3451

Whitefish Downtown Farmers' Market

Central Ave.
May 29th to September 25th
Tuesdays, 5:00pm-7:30pm
Nancy Svenningsen: 862-2043 or 250-8724

A SUMMER CHALLENGE!

Calling all Flathead residents to spend at least \$10 a week on **local** food and generate over \$40 million in the Valley.



CSA Providers:

Swallow Crest Farm: Bigfork
Julian Cunningham: 756-0462



Raven Ridge Farm: Kalispell
Kip Drobish: 752-6837 ("PLA-NTER")

Terrapin: Whitefish
Judy Owsowitz: 862-6263

There is a new FarmHands map! Maps will be available at the Farmers' Markets.

 * *Have a Safe, Fun and Birdyfull Summer, Everyone!* *



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MAY 2007



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The Flathead Audubon Society is affiliated with Montana Audubon and the National Audubon Society. Flathead Audubon meets on the second Monday of each month from September through May. The meeting starts at 7:00PM and includes a featured guest who presents a conservation or nature program. The Board of Directors meet the Monday preceding the general meeting, at 6PM at 295 3rd Ave. EN, in Kalispell. Both meetings are open to all those interested.

THE PILEATED POST is published September through May and is sent to members of Flathead Audubon Society as a membership benefit. For membership information or address change, please call Mike Fanning at 862-8070. To receive this newsletter electronically, email your request to: lindawin@centurytel.net. **Deadline for newsletter copy is the 18th of each month. Contact newsletter editor at 755-1406; email submissions to: piledatedpost@flatheadaudubon.org**

FLATHEAD AUDUBON SOCIETY DIRECTORY

Website: www.flatheadaudubon.org

John Kyle: jkyle@fastmail.us

OFFICERS

President	Bob Lopp	52 West View Drive, Kalispell 59901	257-6886
Vice-President	Mike Fanning	(shrldu@centurytel.net)	862-8070
Secretary	Gail Sullivan	932 Columbia Ave., Whitefish 59937	862-5775
Treasurer	Bruce Tannehill	239 Deer Trail, Whitefish 59937	862-4548
Past-President	Linda deKort	(dekort@montanasky.com)	755-3704

DIRECTORS

2004-2007	Dan Casey	(dcasey@abcbirds.org)	857-3143
2004-2007	Bob Lee	(rml3@centurytel.net)	257-0363
2004-2007	Ansley Ford	(aew333@yahoo.com)	857-6788
2006-2007	Marcy Mahr	(marcymahr@centurytel.net)	752-6837
2005-2008	Paula Smith	(paulabobsmith@centurytel.net)	837-0181
2005-2008	Shirley Harrison	(shirley107@centurytel.net)	844-2291
2006-2009	Lewis Young	50 Garrison Dr., Eureka 59917	889-3492
2006-2009	Barbara Grove	(grove10@centurytel.net)	862-6086
2006-2007	Leslie Kehoe	(kehoe11@centurytel.net)	837-4467
2006-2007	Leo Keane	514 Pine Place, Whitefish 59937	862-5807
2006-2007	Linda Winnie	(lindawin@centurytel.net)	755-1406
2006-2007	Brent Mitchell	(bkmitch@centurytel.net)	756-8130
2006-2007	Lisa Discoe	(ldiscoe@hotmail.com)	837-1456

COMMITTEE CHAIRS

Birdseed Sales	Mike Fanning	862-8070
Christmas Bird Count	Dan Casey	857-3143
Conservation	Lewis Young	889-3492
Education	Ansley Ford	857-6788
Education Coordinator	Nancy Zapotocki	756-9363
Field Trips	Leslie Kehoe	837-4467
Hospitality	Lois Drobish	756-7405
Membership	Mike Fanning	862-8070
Owen Sowerwine	Brent Mitchell	756-8130
Natural Area	Linda Winnie	755-1406
Newsletter	Linda Winnie	755-1406
	Kay Mitchell	756-8130
Nominations	Linda deKort	755-3704
Program	Leo Keane	862-5807
	Rob Ford	857-6788
Publicity	Paula Smith	837-0181
Refuge Projects	Leslie Kehoe	837-4467
Sales	Jill Fanning	862-8070
Website	Paula Smith	837-0181
Wetlands/Waterfowl	Neal Brown	837-5018

MONTANA AUDUBON

P.O. Box 595, Helena, MT 59624
443-3949

www.mtaudubon.org

Executive Director: Steve Hoffman
shoffman@mtaudubon.org

Board President: Betsy Griffing
e_griffing@hotmail.com



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