



the Pileated Post

Newsletter of the Flathead Audubon Society

VOLUME 32

NUMBER 7

MARCH 2008

CONSERVATION EDUCATOR RAISES AWARENESS, PRESENTS CHALLENGES

Lakeside Looks for Lots of Birds!

Flathead Audubon "adopted" Lakeside Elementary School for the day for the Great Background Bird Count (GBBC) on February 15th. Nancy Zapotocki, Conservation Educator, with the assistance of Education Committee volunteers, Aurialle Cohen and Kay Martinez had a fun-filled day birding with 131 students, 1st to 4th grades, from early morning till the last class in the afternoon! Ansley Ford, Education Committee co-chair, Board member and 3rd grade teacher at Lakeside helped with preparations and logistics. She has been doing GBBC for several years with her class and this year we were able to involve most of the school.

Spending about 45 minutes with each class, we began indoors with: basic bird ID, how to use binoculars and a review of common birds we might see (those past year calendars with bird photos came in handy!). Aurialle's pet dove, Mel, graciously modeled
(Lakeside School, continued on page 5...)



Nancy presents "Winter Birds in Your Backyard" at Flathead County Library and outlying branches in February.

Funding the Educational Part of the FAS Mission

Articles in this newsletter describe some recent accomplishments of our Educational Consultant. Nancy's work represents significant expansion of the FAS education program. She is contributing to conservation education across our entire valley. The program is going so well that we now expect this level of activity to continue well into the future.

The only problem is that we must significantly increase our annual budget to handle the additional education expense. The additional expense is about \$15,000, of which half is being contributed by Lex Blood through The Sustainability Fund. Without this contribution, we would never be able to afford Nancy's services. However, that still leaves FAS with a \$7500 budget increase from a base budget (excluding education) of about \$10,000. That is a very large increase and will require an energetic ...

(Funding, continued on page 5...)

MARCH FLATHEAD AUDUBON CALENDAR

Monday, March 10, 2008: Flathead Audubon General Meeting. 7 PM, The Summit, Conference Room 3. Dr. Gene Grove returns with a unique wildlife slide show. (see page 3)

Monday, March 3, 2008: Flathead Audubon Board of Directors Meeting. 6 PM at 295 3rd Ave EN, Kalispell (Jane Lopp & Associates Building) All are welcome.

Thursday, March 6, 2008: Hawk Watching in the Jewel Basin. 7 PM, Central School Museum, 124 Second Ave East, Kalispell (see article, page 3)

Saturday, April 19, 2008: Project WET and WEBFOOT. Lone Pine State Park (see article, page 4)

Friday - Sunday, June 6-8, 2008: Montana Audubon Bird Festival. Rocky Mountain College, Billings (see article, page 6)

All Flathead Audubon Field Trips for March and April are listed on page 4!

BIRD OF THE MONTH

By Marcy Mahr

SNOWY OWL, ARCTIC OWL

My fascination with Snowy Owls (*Bubo scandiacus*) began with a close encounter of the bird kind one winter day in the mid-1980s while I was in college in Vermont. I was studying in the library when I heard a soft thud against the window. I looked up from my book right into the backside of a Snowy Owl. I remember my heart racing as I watched the 2-foot high bird tuck itself up against the glass on the third story window sill. It was such a beautiful creature. I hoped it wouldn't see me through the glass as I studied its pure white feathers with small dark scallops; its thickly-feathered feet that looked like toasty down booties. The owl was squatting and snuggling to keep out of the wind, occasionally doing a bit of preening and shifting of feet. Its head was very large and round; no ear tufts. Its overall shape was squat and very smooth. This owl looked intently outward, scanning the snow-covered lawn in front of the building and beyond. When it was time to leave for my next class, I left the library and slowly walked around the building to see the owl. As I turned the corner, the Snowy was still there, and I distinctly remember feeling targeted by the intensity of its yellow eyes, that piercing stare of a raptor that unmistakably says, "I see you."

Until just a few years ago, the Snowy Owl was regarded as the sole member of a distinct genus, *Nyctea* (as in *Nyctea scandiaca*), until DNA testing showed that it is very closely related to the horned owls in the genus *Bubo*. Depending on where you live, the Snowy Owl has many common names, such as Arctic Owl, Great White Owl, Ghost Owl, Tundra Ghost, White Terror of the North, and Ookpik. If you've ever tried to follow this large, nearly white bird in flat, winter lighting you know it is phantom-like in nature—one moment there's an easily recognizable Snowy Owl and the next moment there's a swirl of snow or low hanging cloud.

Snowies are typically found in the circumpolar North and tend to summer north of latitude 60 degrees north. Their coloration renders them well-suited for life north of the Arctic Circle. Adult males are nearly pure white, and females and young birds have dark scalloping. They winter throughout Canada and northern Eurasia, with birds occurring further south in some years depending on weather and availability of prey. This species has a large geographic range, with an estimated global extent of occurrence of 1-10 million km². The global popula-

tion of Snowy Owls is estimated to be 290,000 individuals. Global population trends have not been quantified, yet populations appear to be stable. According to the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species, which is the main rule-book for assessing the extinction risk of species, the Snowy Owl is evaluated as a species of 'Least Concern.' The Snowy Owl is not believed to be approaching the thresholds for the population decline criterion of the IUCN Red List—a population declining more than 30% in ten years or three generations—according to an assessment made in 2004 by BirdLife International (the IUCN's official Red List authority for birds).

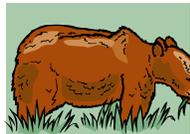
Snowy Owls generally nest on the ground in areas free of snow with good visibility and ready access to hunting. They breed in May; depending on prey availability, clutch sizes range from 5-14 eggs laid singly over the course of several days. The pure white hatchlings emerge about five weeks after laying and are tended by both parents. As the young birds mature, they develop dark speckling and bars.

The Snowy Owl's flight is typically strong, steady and silent. A Snowy Owl can rotate its head up to 270 degrees, and its head frequently swivels as it flies. Its eyes are ever watchful and scanning for prey, ready to pounce. These owls are highly diurnal, although they may hunt at night as well. Prey are captured in their talons on the ground, in the air, or snatched off the water. They transport bigger prey with their talons, while smaller prey is carried in their beaks. Snowy Owls rely on lemmings, voles and other rodents throughout most of their Arctic and wintering range. They can be opportunistic and also feed on young ptarmigans and other birds, as well as small mammals, fish and carrion. They also are known to follow traplines and raid bait from the traps.

Many Audubon members may remember the abundance of Snowy Owls in the Flathead and Mission valleys during the winter of 2005-2006. Reasons for this tremendous 'irruption migration' (as scientists call the phenomenon) remain unknown. Biologists at the Owl Institute based near Ninepipes studied the diet of Snowies that winter and found voles made up about 95% of their diet. In contrast, only three Snowy Owls were reported during last winter 2006-2007. How many might we see this winter? Keep your eyes scanning for this "Ghost Owl" and tell Flathead Audubon what you find.



Dan Casey



March 2008 Program

“Brown Bear, Brown Bear, What Do You See?
I See Bald Eagles Looking At Me.”*



From the world’s ultimate bear-watching place, Katmai National Park and Preserve, in Southern Alaska, to the world’s Bald Eagle Festival, in Haines, Alaska, we will see beautiful wildlife photographs of renowned wildlife photographer, Dr. Gene Grove when he returns to Flathead Audubon on March 10th.

In addition to photographing Alaska brown bears and bald eagles, Dr. Grove recently shot photos of sea otters and their pups at Elkhorn Slough in Moss Landing, CA, and 5000-lb. Elephant seals and their new babies near San Simeon, CA. And there’s MORE! Dr. Grove will also share his photos of wolves in Yellowstone National Park and photos taken at the National Elk Refuge, in Jackson Hole, WY.

Flathead Audubon members were first introduced to Dr. Grove and his remarkable photography at our May 2005 annual potluck. He and his wife, Barbara, have made Whitefish their full-time home for the past four years. Dr. Grove is retired from a medical career in neuropsychiatry and psychopharmacology in Austin, Texas. He has been photographing for 60 years. He is the author of The Joy of Bird Photography. His photographs have appeared on the covers of AUDUBON, SMITHSONIAN and BIRD WATCHER’S DIGEST magazines, as well as in other nature and wildlife books and publications.

You won’t want to miss this very special encore slide presentation! Please join Flathead Audubon on March 10, 2008, at 7 PM in the Community room of The Summit.

*From the book, Brown Bear, Brown Bear, What Do You See, by Bill Martin Jr.

WORDS OF THANKS

February 4, 2008

Dear Members of Flathead Audubon Society,

It was a distinct honor for me and my staff at Jane Lopp & Associates LLC to be presented with the Flathead Audubon’s Conservation Achievement Recognition at the December 10th, 2007 meeting.

It has been a real pleasure to work with Flathead Audubon on the Prudential Global Volunteer projects. You always have a wonderful group of volunteers, who attack the projects with enthusiasm and dedication. The entire community benefits from their efforts.

Conservation of our natural heritage must be a high priority and we at Jane Lopp & Associates LLC want to do our part to keep this the wonderful Flathead that we all enjoy.

Sincerely,

Jane Lopp, Robert Lopp, and Ava Harwood

Beauty of Birds



Are you interested in birds?

Do you want to learn more?

Then sign up for **Beauty of Birds!**

Classes include guest speakers, activities, slides of local birds, and a trip into the field to practice our skills.

Classes will be held April 2nd, 9th, 16th, and 23rd, 6-8 p.m., at Flathead High School.

For more information call 857-6788.

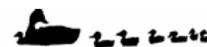
To sign up call Flathead High School at 751-3500.

Come join Flathead Audubon Society in this annual celebration of the

Beauty of Birds!



~ ~ ~ ~ ~
 ♪ **Owls can hear a mouse squeak from 50 yards away.** ♪
 ~ ~ ~ ~ ~



Dan Casey to Speak on Hawk Watching in Jewel Basin

Dan Casey will talk about hawk watching in the Jewel Basin and plans to monitor hawk migration there this fall, on Thursday, March 6, at 7 PM at the Central School Museum (124 Second Ave East, Kalispell).

Readers of *The Pileated Post* will recall Dan’s article in the November 2007 issue about his discovery this past fall that the Jewel is one of the best hawk migration sites in the Northern Rockies. In his presentation March 6, Dan will recount the details of this discovery, and talk about plans to start a hawk migration monitoring station in the Jewel this fall.

Dan’s talk is part of the Glacier Institute’s free Evening Lecture Series, offered by the Institute this spring in celebration of its 25th Anniversary. The Series runs through March 20, with a free lecture every Thursday evening, 7-8:30 PM at Central School Museum. For a full list of lecture topics, visit the Glacier Institute website, www.glacierinstitute.org, or call 755-1211. No registration is required for these lectures.



EARLY SPRING FIELD TRIPS FOR ALL!



SUNDAY, MARCH 16: LOWER VALLEY WATERFOWL TOUR, PART ONE. This is the first of two trips that focus on waterfowl migration. On this 3-4 hour trip to wetland sites near Somers and in the Lower Valley, we should see hundreds of ducks and other early spring arrivals, such as Northern Pintail, Tundra Swan, American and Eurasian Widgeon. Meet at Park n' Ride at the intersection of Hwy 93 and Hwy 82 at 8:30AM. For more information, contact Leslie Kehoe, evenings, at 837-4467.

SATURDAY & SUNDAY, MARCH 29 & 30: FREEZOUT LAKE WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT AREA FIELD-TRIP. Spring waterfowl migration at Freezout Lake WMA is an experience not to be missed! Snow Geese can be counted by the thousands; more than 40 bird species have been seen in past years. Leave at 10:30AM Saturday from the K Mart parking lot in Kalispell and get to the WMA in time to watch the white geese arrive at Freezout Lake that evening. Stay overnight at the Bella Vista Motel (406-466-5711) in Choteau. Other motels in Choteau include The Stage Stop Inn (888-466-5900) and the Gunther Motel (877-491-5444). After watching the geese leave the lake Sunday morning, we head for home, arriving in Kalispell by 5PM. Call Dan Casey at 857-3143 or dcasey@abcbirds.org to arrange carpool and to sign up.

SUNDAY, APRIL 6: LOWER VALLEY WATERFOWL TOUR, PART TWO. Join FAS for a 3-4 hour guided tour of wetland areas near Somers and the north shore of Flathead Lake. We will search for resident and migrating waterfowl, but should also see a wide variety of raptors and early songbirds. This is a great time to bone up on your duck ID and get into the spirit of spring! Meet at Park n' Ride at the intersection of Hwy 93 and Hwy 82 at 8:30AM. For more information, contact Leslie Kehoe, evenings, at 837-4467.

SATURDAY, APRIL 19: EARTH DAY AND THE SECOND ANNUAL MARTY COHEN BIRD-DAY

STROLL. Start out Earth Day weekend with a stroll along the Whitefish River! Meet at the parking lot by the Whitefish City Ball Fields off Hwy. 40 at 8 AM on Saturday, April 21. We will stroll and ride (the path is accessible to wheelchairs and strollers) past ponds and along the river, looking for reliable residents and early migrants. We will return to the parking lot by 10 AM. This is a good field trip for all ages, so bring your kids and grandparents and help us celebrate the Second Annual Marty Cohen Bird-day Stroll. For more information call Bruce Tannehill at 862-4548 or Linda de Kort at 755-3704.



SUNDAY, APRIL 27: BIRDING AROUND SMITH LAKE. A morning of bird watching at Smith Lake Waterfowl Production Area gets us up close and personal with a wide variety of waterfowl. We will look for Sandhill Cranes, grebes and lots of ducks. Around the margins of the lake, we might spot a bluebird or meadowlark. Bald Eagles, Osprey and Marsh Harriers may be seen soaring in the sky or perched on prominent trees by Smith Lake. Meet at Fish, Wildlife & Parks on Meridian Road at 8:00AM. Contact Bob at 270-0371 for more information and to sign up for the trip.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR FOR THE FIRST WEEKEND IN JUNE! Join FAS and Dan and Suzannah Casey the weekend of June 6th - 8th at Tally Lake Campground for an extraordinary weekend of birding. Watch for more information next month.

REMINDER! When you fill out your Montana tax forms this year, be sure to check the "NonGame Wildlife" box and support birds and other species whose programs are not funded by hunting and fishing license fees. Our feathered friends thank you!



Project WET and Project WEBFOOT Present....



Flathead Audubon, Montana WaterCourse, Ducks Unlimited, Fish, Wildlife & Parks, Dept. of Environmental Quality, and NW MT Educational Coop present a workshop on Saturday, April 19, 2008, 9 AM-4 PM at Lone Pine State Park. This workshop will increase your local wetland knowledge and help you connect

the following science concepts across the curriculum: Wetland function, Waterbirds, Waterfowl, Wetland Soils, Animals, and Plants, and Conservation of Wetlands. K-12 formal and informal educators are invited to attend. For further information, contact Nancy Zapotocki, FAS Education Coordinator at naz@centurytel.net.



The Raven and the Owl*

an Alaskan Legend



Wharbird.com

Believe it or not, but in olden times the raven and the owl were both white as snow. One day they met in the tundra, and the raven said: "Aren't you tried of being so white, Owl? I know I am. Why don't we each paint the other a different colour?"

"All right," the owl replied. "We can try and see what comes of it, I suppose."

The raven was pleased. "Good! Good!" he cried. "Let us begin." And he added: "You paint me first and then I'll paint you."

"Oh, no" said the owl. "It was you who suggested it, so it's you that has to begin."

"Very well," the raven agreed. He scraped some of the burnt fat from a lamp, and, using that and a large feather plucked out from his own tail, set to painting the owl. He took great care doing it and drew gray spots of every size on each feather, larger ones on the owl's wings and smaller ones on her breast and back. "Oh, how beautiful I've made you, Owl!" cried he when he had finished. "Just look at yourself."

The owl looked at herself and could not get her fill of looking. "Yes, indeed!" she said at last, pleased. "These spots are lovely. And now let me do the same for you. By the time I get through with you, you'll be so handsome you won't know your own self."

The raven turned his head toward the sun, squinted his eyes and froze to the spot. He was eager for the owl to make a good job of painting him. The owl set about it with great zeal. It took her some time to get done, and when she had, she looked the raven all over. Then glancing from him to herself, she found that the raven was now brighter and more beautiful than she. Angered that this should be so, she came up close to him, poured what was left of the fat she had been using over him and flew away.

The raven rubbed his eyes, and, seeing that he was now quite black all over, cried: "Oh, you sharp-clawed owl, oh, you keen-eyed owl, what have you done! You have made me blacker than soot, blacker than night!"

That is the end of my tale, and from that day on never has a raven been seen that was not black.

*from Canku Ota (Many Paths) online newsletter celebrating Native America.

August 23, 2003 – Issue 94 www.turtletrack.org.

Lakeside School, continued... for bird ID, along with "Woody" the pileated puppet. Mel escaped only a few times and flew around the classroom, much to the delight of the children! He helped us share information on feet, beaks, wings and of course, flight! Outside, we listened to, looked for and recorded sightings of birds for the GBBC. An exciting day it was – calls of "chickadee, dee, dee" could be heard from classrooms, with comparisons in the hallway of which class saw which birds, bird walks went to the lake and "way up that hill," and the younger grades proudly displayed their colorful, hand-made "focus" binoculars. The data will be entered and shared in the national database. We sighted *bald eagles, mountain and black-capped chickadees, white-breasted nuthatches, northern*



Mark A. Hiss
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flicker, Canada geese, song sparrow, American coots, common raven, Steller's jay, black-billed magpie, and European starlings.

Thanks to all the children and teachers at Lakeside Elementary for helping scientists collect information on bird populations in your corner of the U.S.! This count, along with other citizen-science projects, such as the Christmas Bird Count and Project FeederWatch, help to give a picture of winter birds. In thanks, we gave certificates to the teachers for the students, signed by Janis Dickinson, Director of Citizen Science, Cornell Lab of Ornithology and Rob Fergus, Senior Scientist, National Audubon Society, along with coloring pages of some of the common birds. Next year we hope to share this program and "adopt" another school in the valley for the Great Backyard Bird Count.

Funding, continued... fundraising effort on the part of Flathead Audubon. We have formed a fundraising committee to address this challenge. (Isn't that what you always do to try to address a problem; just "form a committee"? The committee will produce a plan for the board to implement. If you have any ideas, let any board member hear them. You will hear more on this topic as time goes on.

Mike Fanning, FAS President



Volunteers Needed to Help Monitor the Owen Sowerwine Natural Area

From Linda Winnie, Co-Chair of the FAS Owen Sowerwine Committee

Flathead Audubon is in its 12th year of managing the Owen Sowerwine Natural Area. An important component of that management is to monitor the Area, to better know what birds and other wildlife frequent the Area, find out when walkways or fences need fixing, look for signs that rules are being violated, watch for parking problems or trail blockages, and generally keep track of what is happening there.

We are looking for volunteers to help with this. All you need to do is tromp around Owen Sowerwine and tell us what you see! Here are two ways you can do this.

(1) Sign up for the Volunteer Monitoring Program.

The purpose of the Volunteer Monitoring Program is to ensure that at least one monitoring visit to the Owen Sowerwine Natural Area on behalf of Flathead Audubon is made about every 2 weeks from March through November. Last year, the first year of the Program, Volunteer Monitors were drawn primarily from the Flathead Audubon Board. This gave us a chance to do a year-long trial run – and it worked quite well! The Program gives us the regular feedback we need in order to keep up on maintenance chores, identify problems, such as weeds, that we need to address, get an idea of visitor numbers and visitor activities, and develop a more complete list of the plants, birds and wildlife using the Area.

This year, we are opening up the Monitoring Program to anyone who is interested in helping out. Members of Flathead Audubon are encouraged to participate. This provides a great opportunity to explore Owen Sowerwine Natural Area and get to know it better. At the same time, you are making a significant contribution to Flathead Audubon's ongoing management of the Area.

The Program works like this:

Each volunteer (or several volunteers, if you want to work together) signs up to cover a monitoring segment which is half a month long (March through November). Volunteer Monitors are expected to make at least one monitoring visit during their chosen segment, including one weekend visit if possible. A monitoring visit can be expected to take from 1½ - 2 hours, but you may spend longer if you wish.

Monitors are provided with a Monitoring Checklist indicating what should be covered on a monitoring visit and a map showing the areas and trails referenced on the Checklist. They are encouraged to use a camera to document their observations. At the end of the monitoring segment, a completed Checklist for each visit and any photos are sent by email or USPS to Brent Mitchell, OSNA Committee Co-Chair.

Volunteer Monitors are also encouraged to talk with visitors to find out how the Natural Area is being used, and provide feedback on the concerns, comments and suggestions of Owen Sowerwine's visitors and neighbors. There is room on the Monitoring Checklist to report your findings. You can look at the Monitoring Checklist by visiting the FAS website, www.flatheadaudubon.org. Go to the Conservation Section, then to the section on Owen Sowerwine.

To volunteer, or to get more information, please contact me at lindawin@centurytel.net or 755-1406, or see me at the Flathead Audubon meeting, where I will have the sign-up sheets.

(2) Give us feedback whenever you visit Owen Sowerwine.

Whenever you go to Owen Sowerwine – whether for just a short time to walk on the trails, or for a few hours of birding, take one of our Monitoring Checklists with you. You can use the Checklist to indicate what parts of Owen Sowerwine you visited, and what you saw there. You can get a copy of the Checklist from the Flathead Audubon website, or contact me and I will send you one. Copies of the Checklist are also available at the Flathead Audubon meetings. Note that you can also use the Checklist to report the birds you see. The same goes for any new plants or areas of weed infestation. If you find a species as yet unreported for Owen Sowerwine, and tell us about it on your Checklist, we'll see that it gets added to the Owen Sowerwine Bird or Plant List. We encourage all Flathead Audubon members to become eyes and ears for the Chapter when they visit Owen Sowerwine.



MONTANA BIRD FESTIVAL

Montana Audubon and the Yellowstone Valley Audubon Chapter are hosting the 2008 Montana Bird Festival at Rocky Mountain College in Billings, June 6-8. The festival will celebrate the tremendous variety of birds found in the area's stream and river bottoms, mountain forests, prairies, and wetlands. Field trips include visits

to the Pryor Mountains, Pompey's Pillar, Yellowstone River, Audubon's Conservation Education Center, and more. Workshops, such as Beginning Birding, will also be offered. Check Montana Audubon's website for updates on speakers and trips. A festival brochure with all the details will be sent to all Audubon members in Montana in early April.

THREE MONTANA BIRDS ON THE 2007 WATCHLIST

WatchList 2007, the newest and most scientifically sound list of America's birds at greatest risk, was released in November 2007 by National Audubon and the American Bird Conservancy. The bird species on this list are often rare and limited in range; consequently, they face a more imminent threat of extinction. Forty of these imperiled species spend at least part of the year in Montana. Three of those birds are profiled here:

Williamson's Sapsucker. The Williamson's Sapsucker inhabits mainly mature and old-growth Ponderosa pine forests, and aspen to a lesser extent. All these forest types have declined across the Montana landscape. They will often use open, harvested timber stands, but it is unknown whether nesting success is high enough in these areas to sustain populations. ABC has been working to build a west-side cavity-nester initiative to address the needs of this and other WatchList species dependent on standing dead trees. Montana Audubon is working to identify key habitats (called "Important Bird Areas") for this and other WatchList species in Montana so these areas can be prioritized for conservation action.



Bob Martinka



Dan Casey

Mountain Plover. Mountain Plovers are entirely dependent on shortgrass prairie for breeding, and have experienced habitat loss and population declines throughout their range, in part due to severe declines in prairie dog colonies, which provide ideal habitat conditions for nesting plovers. The Montana population is now estimated to be fewer than 1500 birds. Protection and enhancement of large blocks of native prairie and restoration of prairie dog colonies will be required to maintain or increase Mountain Plover populations.

Black Swift. A highly-specialized, poorly known bird, the Black Swift nests behind waterfalls and raises a single chick each year. Based on recent surveys, Glacier National Park and the surrounding area is a key nesting area in Montana for this rare species. Climate change and its effect on glacier-fed waterfalls will most likely have a profound impact on the swift. A more thorough inventory of potential nesting sites is needed, although recent surveys by Montana Audubon and American Bird Conservancy found the first new nest sites in over 40 years, and confirmed occupancy of a traditional nest site in the Mission Mountains.



Bill Schmoker

For the complete WatchList and details on how to help, visit www.audubon.org. To learn more about Montana Audubon's work protecting these and other species, visit www.mtaudubon.org.

A GIFT TO MONTANA from MONTANA AUDUBON

Montana Audubon is pleased to announce the "Birds of Montana" book project. This book, scheduled for completion by fall 2011, will summarize information on the status, distribution, biology, conservation, and historical aspects of the 421 bird species known to occur in the state. Because Montana is one of the few states without a general reference on its birds, the need for this book is great. Montana Audubon has contracted with ornithologist and former Director of Bird Conservation Jeff Marks to lead this exciting project. Jeff and co-authors John Carlson, Dan Casey and Paul Hendricks began work on the book in September 2007.

We are seeking funds to support research and writing time, pay for illustrations and travel to museums and libraries, and defray some printing costs. All royalties from book sales will go to Montana Audubon. In addition to requesting funds from foundations, businesses, and government agencies, we seek support from individuals with an interest in birds and conservation in Montana.



One way individuals can participate is through sponsorship of species accounts. The sponsor's name will appear at the end of each account and in the acknowledgments. Donations to sponsor an account range from \$100-300, depending on the conservation status of the species. Agency or corporation rate is \$1,000 per species account independent of conservation priority. Donations are fully tax-deductible. Check the Montana Audubon website for a complete list of bird species available for sponsorship.

We hope you share our excitement about "Birds of Montana" and that you view the project as we do, a gift to Montanans and others who wish to learn more about our state's birds, and a means of encouraging the public to treasure and protect the abundance and variety of birds in Montana and the habitats that sustain them. A book like "Birds of Montana" is long overdue, and you can help make its completion possible. We encourage you to sponsor your favorite species to support this effort.



MARCH 2008



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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

OFFICERS

President	Mike Fanning	(shrdlu@centurytel.net)	862-8070
Vice-President	Bob Lee	(rml3@centurytel.net)	257-0363
Secretary	Gail Sullivan	932 Columbia Ave., Whitefish 59937	862-5775
Treasurer	Bruce Tannehill	239 Deer Trail, Whitefish 59937	862-4548
Past-President	Bob Lopp	52 West View Drive, Kalispell 59901	257-6886

Website: www.flatheadaudubon.org

FlockMaster - John Kyle: jkyle@fastmail.us
Conservation Educator - Nancy Zapotocki: naz@centurytel.net

DIRECTORS

2005-2008	Paula Smith	(paulabobsmith@centurytel.net)	837-0181
2006-2009	Lewis Young	50 Garrison Dr., Eureka 59917	889-3492
2007-2010	Ansley Ford	(aew333@yahoo.com)	857-6788
2007-2010	Marcy Mahr	(marcymahr@centurytel.net)	752-6837
2007-2010	Mary Nelesen	(mnelesen@centurytel.net)	755-7678
2007-2010	Rod McIver	975 Rose Crossing, Kalispell 59901	756-9445
2007-2008	Leslie Kehoe	(kehoes11@centurytel.net)	837-4467
2007-2008	Linda Winnie	(lindawin@centurytel.net)	755-1406
2007-2008	Brent Mitchell	(bkmitch@centurytel.net)	756-8130

COMMITTEE CHAIRS

Birdseed Sales	Bob Lee	257-0363
	Mary Nelesen	755-7678
Christmas Bird Count	Dan Casey	857-3143
Conservation	Lewis Young	889-3492
Education	Ansley Ford	857-6788
	Sonja Hartmann	387-4150
Field Trips	Leslie Kehoe	837-4467
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