



the Pileated Post

Newsletter of the Flathead Audubon Society

VOLUME 37

NUMBER 8

APRIL 2013

LOOK FOR A SURVEY MONKEY COMING YOUR WAY!

Your Flathead Audubon board is moving into the 21st century and sending you a survey monkey this month. So, what is this monkey? Some of you may know what this is... a survey monkey IS NOT a computer virus, nor a real monkey, nor any type of primate. It is a free online service that we used to design an electronic 5-minute survey with 6 questions to answer.

We want to hear what you think our chapter should be doing! We really need your input to help direct Flathead Audubon's future. The survey results will really help. We will summarize the results at the May meeting in Whitefish. If you can't do the survey on a computer, maybe ask a family member or computer savvy person to help you.

The survey will begin at the end of March and close April 15, tax day. We ask that you only take the survey once, but you can forward the information to anyone you think might be helpful, whether or not they are a member. They could be a relative, friend, member of a partner organization, or someone



who was an Audubon member who might be interested in becoming a member. All input is appreciated.

You can get to the survey the following ways:

Pileated Post Email: If you get your Pileated Post by email, hold down the Control key and click on this address: www.surveymonkey.com/s/NQ8DD62.

Follow the simple instructions and questions. You may need to copy/paste the link if clicking doesn't work.

Printed Pileated Post: If you get a printed (hard copy) Pileated Post, you can type the address above into your computer browser, or go to our own Flathead Audubon website (see below).

Flathead Audubon Website: Search or navigate to our Flathead Audubon website www.flatheadaudubon.org. Once you are there, click on the Survey icon.

Questions or problems? Email gbis-sell535@gmail.com. THANKS for your help!

*The first sparrow of spring! The year beginning with younger hope than ever!
The faint silvery warblings heard over the partially bare and moist fields from the bluebird, the song sparrow,
and the red-wing, as if the last flakes of winter tinkled as they fell!*

What at such a time are histories, chronologies, traditions and all written revelations?

Henry David Thoreau



APRIL FLATHEAD AUDUBON CALENDAR

Monday, April 8, 2013: Flathead Audubon General Meeting. 7 PM at Gateway Community Center, United Way Conference Room. Chris Hammond presents "Building a Regional Nongame Program: The Good, The Bad, and the Beautiful." See page 3!

Monday, April 1, 2013: FAS Board of Directors Meeting. 6 PM at 295 3rd Ave. EN. All welcome.

Wednesdays, April 10—May 1, 2013: Beauty of Birds Class. See details on page 11.

Saturday, May 11, 2013: Flathead Forestry Expo. Trumble Creek Experimental Forest. See page 3!

Complete Field Trip List on Pages 6 and 7!

BIRD OF THE MONTH

By Ben Long

ALL HAIL THE NORTHERN PINTAIL

All wild ducks are beautiful but for my money, the most beautiful is the Northern Pintail. They have a combination of aerial grace, striking plumage, heft and old-fashioned class. They are ducks with *elan*.

There are some 35 species of ducks in North America, many of which find their way to the Flathead Valley. Pintails are early spring migrants in the Flathead; during that period, they can far outnumber Mallards. Later in the spring, they are much less common, and are present in small numbers throughout the rest of the year, even into winter.

The Pintail's name comes from the trademark tail feathers of the drake during breeding season — they protrude from the posterior like an arrow, giving the drake a streamlined look in flight. The other telltale feature is the drake's head, which is a rich reddish-brown, with a white, question mark-shaped stripe running down the back of its head and neck to the white breast and belly. Male pintails have an unusual blue stripe on the bill during breeding season.

(Here's a good tip. When trying to identify waterfowl or any other bird, take special note of where it is white. This can be quite distinctive and diagnostic.)

True to fashion in the bird world, males are flashy and females are plain. The males are flashy to attract mates; the females plan to hide on the nest. They nest on islands and shore near big marshy waters.

Like Mallards, Pintails are dabblers — finding small aquatic plants and organisms on the surface and shallows of marshes and ponds. They also eat waste grain in stubble fields. Pintails are about the same size as a mallard, which is medium sized for a duck, but more tapered in form and graceful in flight.

Pintails are highly gregarious and acrobatic and when flying in groups, they bring to mind the precise piloting of fighter plane squadrons. Some of the best shows of Northern Pintails I've seen have been at



Freezout Lakes Waterfowl Production Area, but I've seen them at marshy water bodies such as Smith Lake, the sloughs along the main stem of the Flathead River and in the potholes of the Mission Valley.

Pintails are found year round in western Montana, and found in eastern Montana mostly in the summer. They nest in the wetlands across Montana, but at relatively low densities.

I was surprised to learn that Pintails are a global species. They summer all over the northern hemisphere, from Montana across the Canadian Shield and to Siberia. They winter as far south as Panama, India and Southeast Asia. European birds that summer in Scandinavia fly over the Sahara Desert and winter in central Africa. It's fun to imagine these birds resting mid-migration in some oasis, amid camels and sand dunes.

Pintails don't just migrate North-South, but horizontally as well. Migrant Northern Pintails banded in Japan have shown up in Utah and Mississippi; birds banded in eastern Canada have been found in England a few days later.

Pintails are popular targets for hunters, providing sporty shooting and good eating. Another common predator of the Pintail is the skunk, which tends to raid nests. Studies at Freezout show that pairs that nest on islands have better luck surviving skunks than pairs that nest on shore.

There are estimated to be about 3 million Northern Pintails in North America. They seem to have declined markedly from the 1950s. Much of that decline is blamed on avian diseases. Happily, the great range and relatively large numbers of the Northern Pintail worldwide help keep its numbers relatively strong, as it shares the planet with 7 billion hungry human beings.

(Sources: Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks, US Fish & Wildlife Service and Ducks Unlimited.)

If You Build It, Will They Come?

It may take a while for birds to discover a new feeder. If you are not seeing birds within a few days of setting up your feeder, try sprinkling some seeds on the ground around the feeder to make the new feeding site more obvious. If seed in the feeder is blowing out or getting wet, there is a good chance that your birds are getting the same treatment. Your feeder may simply be too exposed. Moving it to a calmer, more sheltered spot may increase visits. In newly developed housing areas, birds may not feel sufficiently protected because trees and shrubs may be small or few in number. Remember that bird populations fluctuate naturally from year to year. If you notice a scarcity of feeder birds this year, you may be surprised by an abundance of birds in another year or two.



April Program



BUILDING A REGIONAL NONGAME PROGRAM: THE GOOD, THE BAD, AND THE BEAUTIFUL



Chris Hammond is the first Nongame Biologist based in Region 1 of Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks. At our April meeting, Chris will describe the building of this program from its inception, beginning in 2009. Chris is responsible for survey, inventory, management and conservation of primarily nongame wildlife species. He also works on mitigation projects that involve conservation easements, acquisitions and habitat restoration.

Chris is a native Montanan raised in Whitefish. He has spent almost his entire life in Montana with the exception of seven years he served in the US Army. He attended Flathead Valley Community College for two years before transferring to the University of Montana where he obtained a Bachelor of Science in Wildlife Biology in 2004 and a Master of Science in Wildlife Biology in 2008. His undergraduate and graduate work focused on the ecology of Common Loons in northwest Montana. In addition to his normal duties, he is a member of the Montana Common Loon Working Group, Bald Eagle Working

Group, Herp Working Group, Bat Working Group, and Wildlife Working Group. Chris is also the President of the Montana Chapter of The Wildlife Society.

In his relatively short time as a wildlife biologist, he has authored the following conservation documents with assistance from the respective working group members and other colleagues: Montana Bald Eagle Management Guidelines: An Addendum to Montana Bald Eagle Management Plan (1994), Montana Bald Eagle Status Report 2009, Conservation Plan for Common Loons in Montana, FWP Northwest Montana Terrestrial Climate Change Species Monitoring and Conservation Plan. In his free time, he enjoys hunting, camping, and hiking with his wife and three daughters.

Learn why Chris defines the Nongame Program as "The Good, the Bad and the Beautiful." Please join us on Monday, April 8 at 7 PM in our new meeting location in the United Way Conference Room at the Gateway Community Center on Highway 2 West, Kalispell.

QUIET! - IT'S AN AUCTION!

Monday, May 13, Whitefish Community Center

Get Ready! Our May FAS meeting will again feature our annual, fantastically popular, unbelievably diverse, world-famous SILENT AUCTION! This is the only time this year that you will have total access to such a wildly eclectic, fascinating collection of used, useful (or not), handmade, baked, nurtured, formerly cherished STUFF! You should go straight to your garage, closet, basement, bookshelf, garden shed or pantry and sort into a (large) box everything that you can do without and someone else can't. Your generous donations on May 13 will help Flathead Audubon fund the Conservation Education program and Owen Sowerwine Natural Area, and will make another person delighted with their "find." Past popular categories have been nature books and CDs, plants, art work, homemade bread and cookies, bird houses and bird feeders. Directions to the Whitefish Community Center and full details of the May meeting will be included in next month's *Pileated Post*.



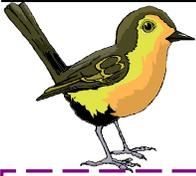
Family Forestry Expo

Family Forestry Expo is a weekend event for families that gives real, hands-on experience to the role that forests perform in our everyday lives. Expo participants explore how the different parts of a forest are connected to make up a dynamic living system, how people and all parts of the environment are dependent on one another and how each affects the other. As in years past, the FFE will take place at Stoltze Lumber's Trumbull Creek Educational Forest north of Columbia Falls on Tamarack Lane. On Saturday, 11 May, there is a free "loggers lunch," demonstrations, exhibits, FVCC's Logger Sports competition demonstration and forest walk with many different educational stops ... including a popular one from Flathead Audubon.

Flathead Audubon has had a booth and activities at the Expo for many years. We are looking for fun volunteers to help. If you enjoy being outdoors on a spring day and talking to people about forests and ecosystems, please contact Ashley Mason, FAS Conservation Educator, at AudubonAshley@gmail.com.

Whether you are a volunteer, participant, or just want to see what it is all about, everyone is encouraged to come on out on Saturday, 11 May from 9 AM until about 3:30 PM.

From Bob Lee



CHIRPS & SQUAWKS

From

Kay Mitchell for the Flathead Audubon Board



Highlights from March 2013 Board Meeting:

- ◆ Studied current budget and discussed ways to cover the shortfall this year. Final budget for next year will be voted on at April Board Meeting
- ◆ Voted to install a tool to accept donations on the FAS website
- ◆ Heard reports from The Wildlife Society meeting
- ◆ Approved new FAS publication policy (see below)
- ◆ Discussed FAS survey which Gael Bissell is assembling (see page 1)
- ◆ Talked with a board member of Flathead Wildlife, Inc., about commonalities and possible future project collaboration

Full minutes of every Flathead Audubon Board meeting are printed on Flathead Audubon's website, www.flatheadaudubon.org, after they are officially accepted at the following month's meeting. Click on "About Us," then "Board Meeting Minute Archives." Take a look!

DARK MONEY

May is fast approaching – and for FAS, that means the annual business meeting and, of course, elections! For newer members, FAS elects officers for a 2-year term with the President and Vice President elected one year and Secretary and Treasurer elected the next. So there are staggered terms. Board of Director positions are generally elected for a 3-year term, but occasionally for a 1-year term. Some Committee Chairs are usually appointed in the fall to serve as Board members as well.

This year, we need to elect a President and Vice President as well as a 3-year Board position and a 1-year Board position. Also, last year, the newly-elected Secretary had to resign and an interim Secretary was appointed. Therefore, we need to elect someone to fill that vacancy until the end of the term (another year).

At this point, I have talked with some likely candidates and have a good slate of candidates building. But this is your organization, so if there is someone you would like to see in a leadership role, please contact me (RML3@centurytel.net or 270-0371). I will talk with them about the role and responsibilities. Currently, Bob Lopp is a candidate for President, Kay Mitchell is a candidate for Vice President and Marylane Pannell is a candidate to fill the Secretary position. Jan Wassink is a candidate for the 3-year BoD position. Thanks!

Bob Lee, Nominations Committee

And remember – if you get up in the morning and recognize that person in the mirror, they would be a good leader for Flathead Audubon.

Editor's Note: Because The Pileated Post consistently includes so many original and locally written articles, many of Montana's other chapters regularly "borrow" our pieces for their own newsletters and websites. To protect the integrity of our writers, the FAS Board of Directors has approved the following policy addressing the "sharing" of our material.

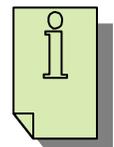


Flathead Audubon Policy Publication and Re-use of Printed Materials

(as approved by FAS Board of Directors 3/14/2013)

It is the policy of Flathead Audubon Society (FAS) that all materials published in *The Pileated Post*, as well as written materials used in the FAS Education Program, plus written materials incidental to any other FAS activities, are the property of Flathead Audubon Society and, unless otherwise restricted in the byline, may be used, re-used, quoted, and reprinted by any other person or group. Any use outside of Flathead Audubon must include attribution to the author of the material and either "Flathead Audubon Society" or "*The Pileated Post*." Minor changes to the content of the material so used are allowed, providing that the changes are truthful and do not alter the overall meaning of the piece.

Upon Board approval of this policy, Flathead Audubon Society considers all materials referenced above to have been created and submitted in accordance with this policy.



From MT Fish, Wildlife & Parks OUT OF HIBERNATION

Time to Prepare for the Bears

Montana's hibernating grizzly bears will soon be stirring.

Adult males usually emerge first from winter dens in mid-March. When bears emerge from their dens they are physically depleted and food is a priority. They focus on finding and eating carrion, like winter-killed elk and deer, for a quick boost of energy.



Robert Savannah, USFWS

Grizzlies are often tempted to go where black bear, raccoons and domestic dogs are getting into garbage. If these species are already causing problems near-by, consider it an early warning that food attractants are available and need to be removed.

Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks' bear experts stress that conflict prevention steps can greatly reduce the chances of attracting a grizzly bear.

FWP recommends bear resistant bins in communities and on ranches; electric fence systems to protect bee yards and sheep bedding grounds; random redistribution of livestock carcasses each spring; and educational programs in schools and communities.

FWP's **Be Bear Aware** website at www.fwp.mt.gov is an easy way for homeowners and landowners to assess what they need to do to prevent bear conflicts. Go there **for tips and tools** on obtaining and using bear spray, safe camping and hiking, access to bear resistant produce and a guide to the many food-related and other items that attract bears to a property.

How are we entranced by the simple splendors of this wonderful drama of nature!

Wilhelm von Humboldt

OK, All You Procrastinators!

Now that you've put off your doing your taxes for as long as you can, assuage your guilt by checking the Non-game Wildlife box on your Montana tax form. Your just-in-time donation will help provide better food and living quarters for the small critters who otherwise get little attention from the rest of the world.



SPECIAL GIFTS

I wish to help make Flathead Audubon's vision a reality. Here is my contribution to the continued success of our chapter.



Dave Menke, USFWS

- Eagle Donation, \$1000+
- Osprey Donation, \$500+
- Snowy Owl Donation, \$250+
- Merlin Donation, \$100+
- Kestrel Donation, \$50+
- My Own Vision, amount of my choice

* * * *

The FAS activity which most interests me is:

- Education Programs
- Owen Sowerwine Natural Area
- Scholarships and Grants
- Field Trips and Outdoor Events

* * * *

I want my gift to recognize another:

In memory of _____

In honor of _____

Please send a notification of this gift to:

Name _____

Address _____

City _____

State _____ Zip _____

* * * *

Donor's Name _____

Address _____

City _____

State _____ Zip _____

Please do not acknowledge my gift in the Pileated Post

* * * *

Please make checks payable to:

Flathead Audubon Society

P.O. Box 9173

Kalispell, MT 59904

Your gift is tax deductible.

Thanks!

...to a special couple who have made special donations to Flathead Audubon through March 18, 2013



USFWS

Merlin

Ann Lent and Charles McCarty



SPRING/EARLY SUMMER FIELD TRIPS!



ANIMAL TRACKING AND SIGN INTERPRETATION CLASS

Saturday, March 30, 9 AM - 5 PM



Join Montana Wilderness Association for a unique presentation by professional tracker and conservation educator Brian Baxter. We will start the day with a classroom session that will include a PowerPoint slide presentation covering over 50 species of Northern Rockies wildlife. We'll define terminology, discuss measuring techniques, and review laminated tracking guide sheets that will be made available to participants. At midday, we will head out to the Owen Sowerwine Natural Area to practice techniques learned in class, apply our skills, explore and observe tracks, trails and sign in a diverse habitat area. This is a "Hands On, Boots on the Ground" program, so please dress appropriately for an easy day hike, bring lunch, water, binoc's, cameras, snowshoes if you have them, curiosity and sense of humor! Meet at Kalispell Montessori School. Space is limited, so call today to register at 406-755-6304.

GIVE A HOOT (Barred Owls)

Saturday evening, April 13

Pete Fisher will again host an evening of listening and calling for Barred and possibly other owls in the east Flathead Valley. Limited to about 25 individuals. Contact Pete (250-9624 or fisher-pete88@yahoo.com) to pre-register; if there is overwhelming interest again, FAS will try to schedule another night of hooting and owling adventure.



SEVENTH ANNUAL COHEN STROLL

Saturday, April 20, 9 - 11 AM

Celebrate our beautiful quality of life in the Flathead as Ferne and Marty Cohen have taught us...by getting outdoors and leaving a small carbon footprint. We will meet at 9 AM at the pond Northeast of the North Valley Hospital in Whitefish. This is just North of the soccer field at Whitefish. In the past, we have seen waterfowl on the pond and riparian species in the wetland. We will stroll along the Whitefish River on the bike path. This two hour trip is accessible for wheelchairs and strollers. Bruce Tannehill, leader. Call 862-4548 for information.



TENTH ANNUAL WILD MILE WILDFLOWER AND BIRD WALKS

Tuesdays of May and June

Please join Anne Morley of Montana Native Plant Society and Neal Brown of Flathead Audubon for an informative stroll along the Wild Mile of the Swan River. This is an easy level trail accessible to all. Walk distance is approximately two miles. Meet 10:00 AM at the Bigfork Summer Playhouse in downtown Bigfork. We try to be back to downtown Bigfork by noon. Bring binoculars for bird watching! Questions? Call Neal Brown 837-5018 or Anne Morley 886-2242.



BIRDING IN GLACIER NATIONAL PARK

Saturday, May 25

Limited to 20 participants. This trip will focus on identifying neotropical migrants by sight and ear. We will walk along McDonald Creek listening and looking for birds and stop at the Fish Creek Campground to search for Harlequin Ducks and scan the cottonwoods for vireos and warblers. We may head up the inside North Fork Road or drive along the Camas Road, stopping along the way in search of Black-Backed Woodpeckers, Olive-sided Flycatchers and Northern Hawk Owls. Please sign up for this trip with Steve Gniadek at 892-7406. We will be meet at the Alberta Visitor Center in West Glacier at 8:00AM and return by noon. Please note: a Glacier National Park entrance fee or pass is required.



Jeannie Marcure Photo

A TOUR OF THE LAZY CREEK AREA ABOVE THE HEAD OF WHITEFISH LAKE

Sunday, May 26, 8 - 11 AM

Join FAS on this three-hour field trip for a tour of this not-often-visited area. This trip provides a great opportunity to observe Warblers, American Redstarts, Northern Water Thrush, Black-Headed Grosbeak, and other birds. Meet at McDonalds in Whitefish 8:00 AM. If you have questions or to sign up, call Bruce Tannehill at 862-4548.



Gerrit Vyn

(More Field Trips on next page!)



SPRING/EARLY SUMMER FIELD TRIPS!



WARBLER WEEKEND AT TALLY LAKE

Friday and Saturday, May 31-June 1

Come join FAS at the Tally Lake Campground for an extraordinary weekend of birding and relaxing. The group campsite at the campground has been reserved for the weekend. Throughout the weekend, we will be focusing on warbler identification, birding by ear, and photography. This is an ideal time of year to find a wide variety of migrant and resident birds; most notable is that all of the warbler species which can be found in NW Montana are found here. Plenty of other activities can be enjoyed at Tally Lake as well: you can bring your canoes and kayaks, play volleyball or horseshoes, or go hiking on one of the numerous trails found close to the campground. There is a covered pavilion for foul weather. The cost is \$15.00 per camper unit (trailer, tent, van) per night. Please contact Dan or Susannah Casey at 857-3143 if you have questions about this outstanding adventure into the world of birds.



Jeannie Marcure Photo

EXPLORING THE VIKING CREEK WETLANDS PRESERVE

Early June date to be announced in next *Pileated Post*.



Viking Creek Preserve now has a completed wheelchair accessible boardwalk through a rich and diverse riparian area and old growth forest. Trip leader is Leo Keane. Viking Creek Preserve is closed between March 15 - May 1.

For all Field Trips, dress for the weather, bring binoculars or spotting scope if you have them, wear sturdy footwear, and drive and pull off the road safely.

In the woods, we return to reason and faith . . . Ralph Waldo Emerson



NATIONAL AUDUBON



CONVENTION 2013

July 12-15

Stevenson, WA



Registration for the convention is now available through the website at www.audubonconvention.org! Visit the site for registration and links to make reservations at one of the three convention hotels. You will also find detailed information about field trips, workshops, transportation options, and scholarships, as well as birding and other activities in the local area.

CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT RESULTS

This year Audubon is moving to digital delivery of the Christmas Bird Count (CBC) results, rather than printing and mailing CBC summary report to participants. If you would like to receive information regarding the digital edition of American Birds this year, please sign up online at www.audubon.org/citizenscience by entering your email address. Even if your email address is currently in the CBC system, you will receive American Birds only if you sign up through the new citizen science network.

The 14th Annual Wings Across the Big Sky Festival

June 7 – 9, 2013, Lewistown, Montana!

Join Montana Audubon for dynamic birding field trips, great speakers, interesting presentations, and fun festivities as we celebrate efforts to conserve our birds and wildlife in the heart of Montana. **Registration is open NOW!** Visit www.mtaudubon.org for more information.



Keynote speaker Susan Bonfield of the International Migratory Bird Day and Environment for the Americas will share with us a glimpse into the Western Hummingbird Partnership and the world of hummingbirds. There will be an art workshop, tours of historic Lewistown and its architecture, and other things to do for those who choose to remain at the hotel during field trip outings. An official Cornell Lab of Ornithology eBird Trail Tracker, the first and only in the state, will be available in the lobby of the festival hotel, the Yogo Inn, to record your sightings!

FLATHEAD AUDUBON SOCIETY TREASURER'S REPORT (Calendar Year 2012)

In 2012 the Flathead Audubon Society has continued its valley-wide education program while supporting and improving the Owen Sowerwine Nature Area. The board continues to struggle with the challenge of financially supporting these projects. Donations of our membership, businesses, foundations and local organizations have made it possible. Expenditures of FAS fall into one of three categories: Operations, Owen Sowerwine Natural Area, and Education.

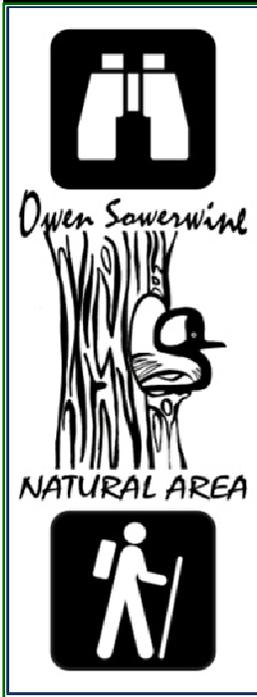
EXPENDITURES FOR CALENDAR YEAR	2011	2012
Operating (Newsletter, Office, Insurance, etc.)	\$9,186	\$12,450
Owen Sowerwine	\$723	\$4,892
Education	\$23,049	\$26,101
TOTAL	\$32,958	\$43,443

The over \$10,000 increase in expenses was due to a number of unusual and mostly onetime expenditures. The accessible trail at the Owen Sowerwine Natural Area cost \$3,843, we donated \$1000 for the new Montana Bird Distribution book, paid \$1,161 for badly needed insurance, and paid about \$2000 for materials for the U.S. Forest Service Education Grant (we are completely reimbursed by the Forest Service for this last item). The chart below illustrates how hard the board members have worked to fund these programs.

INCOME FOR THE YEAR	2011	2012
Local Dues	\$5,040	\$4,611
Membership Donations and Sponsorships	\$3,075	\$3,653
Amount Withdrawn From Investments	\$2,520	\$5,005
Other Income (Sales, Interest)	\$2,009	\$2,613
Montana Audubon Festival Auction, Raffle, etc.		\$3,064
Sustainability Fund	\$7,500	\$2,500
U.S. Forest Service Education Grant		\$3,181
Other Non-reoccurring Grants	\$1,000	0
Round-Up-For-Safety Grant for OSNA Trail		\$2,500
Montana Audubon Grant for OSNA Accessible Trail		\$300
Prudential Foundation	\$1,000	\$2,425
Whitefish Community Foundation	\$500	\$500
Soroptimists of Whitefish	\$1,000	\$1,500
Art Ortenberg (Raptor Day)	\$2,742	\$3,620
Tom and Teresa Quinn Foundation	\$1,000	\$1,000
End of Year Fund Drive (up to December 31)	\$4,288	\$2,420
Cinnabar Foundation	\$1,000	\$2,000
National Audubon	\$2,784	\$1,654
TOTALS	\$35,458	\$42,546

It is the goal of the Board of Directors of FAS to continue to fund the education program at the \$20,000+ level for years to come. We have been very fortunate to receive generous donations. **In order to continue the education program and other projects, FAS must have the continued financial support of its members as well as help from foundations and local businesses.**

Treasurer's Report, continued at bottom of next page ...



CAN YOU HELP?

VOLUNTEER MONITORS FOR OWEN SOWERWINE ARE NEEDED

From Linda Winnie

Our *sixth* season of Volunteer Monitoring at Owen Sowerwine began March 1! Volunteers are needed to make monitoring visits to the Owen Sowerwine Natural Area (OSNA) throughout this coming summer. There are **2 ways you can help:**

- 1. Take an OSNA Volunteer Monitoring Form** with you *whenever you visit OSNA*. Record what you see and hear, and mail the form to Richard Kuhl (address on form).
- 2. Do a scheduled monitoring visit.**
Only **4 more** volunteers are needed to fill the summer schedule – one for each of these still untaken summer monitoring periods:

May 16-31 June 16-31 August 1-15 August 16-31

The job is simple. Make one monitoring visit during the period you choose, fill out a Monitoring Form and mail it to Richard. For more information or to sign up to cover one of these periods, please contact me (lindawin@centurytel.net or 755-1406). Volunteers get a reminder call or email shortly before their scheduled monitoring visit.

The OSNA Volunteer Monitoring form can be printed from the FAS website (www.flatheadaudubon.org), and is also available at FAS meetings. A trail map that helps you locate the places referred to on the form can also be obtained from the FAS website and at FAS meetings. Or contact me if you want them emailed or mailed to you.

Updated Species List for OSNA

The most recently updated bird species list for Owen Sowerwine is now available on the Flathead Audubon website www.flatheadaudubon.org. The new list shows 128 species, up from 114 three years ago. New species have been added to the list, not only by field trip participants, including the Bird Festival trips last spring, but also by folks who have simply reported what they saw on a recreational visit to the Area.

You can help build the OSNA species list even more. When you visit OSNA, if you observe a species not on the OSNA species list, please record it on your Volunteer Monitoring form, or report it directly to the list compiler, Dan Casey: dcasey@abcbirds.org or 857-3143. To help you on your way, here is a list from Dan of 30 species that might reasonably be expected to be present at OSNA but have not yet been spotted there. Please keep an eye out for these species when you visit OSNA and let us know if you see one of them!

↓ Snow Goose	Greater Yellowlegs	Nashville Warbler	↑
↓ Cackling Goose	Lesser Yellowlegs	Tennessee Warbler	↑
↓ Tundra Swan	Pectoral Sandpiper	Spotted Towhee	↑
↓ Trumpeter Swan	Herring Gull	Clay-colored Sparrow	↑
↓ Gadwall	California Gull	Lincoln's Sparrow	↑
↓ Northern Shoveler	Barred Owl	Swamp Sparrow	↑
↓ Ring-necked Duck	Long-eared Owl	White-throated Sparrow	↑
↓ Barrow's Goldeneye	Western Screech-Owl	Harris's Sparrow	↑
↓ Pied-billed Grebe	Pacific (Winter) Wren	Common Grackle	↑
↓ Northern Harrier	Bewick's Wren	White-winged Crossbill	↑

FAS Treasurer's Report, continued ...

In 2010 Flathead Audubon Society's Board instituted three funds dedicated to long term support of projects. Part of the capital monies placed in these funds were bequests left to Flathead Audubon by members. Only 2% of the Education and Owen Sowerwine Income funds are used each year so that these funds can grow to be a permanent financial support for these projects.

FUND	AMOUNT IN FUND 12/31/12
EDUCATION INCOME FUND	\$73,240
OWEN SOWERWINE INCOME FUND	\$10,396
CONSERVATION INCOME FUND	\$32,124



ESPECIALLY FOR SPRING! BIRDWATCHERS' RESOURCES FROM AROUND THE WORLD



Although there is much information on the internet on birdwatching, the following provide Montana-specific information:

To Learn About Unusual Bird Sightings in Montana

- ◆ Montana's Online Birding Forum: www.pets.groups.yahoo.com/group/MOB-Montana/
- ◆ Montana's State Bird Hotline Number: 406-721-9799
- ◆ www.montanabirdingtrail.org

Bird Trails and Trip Planning

- ◆ www.virtualbirder.com/vbirder/realbirds/rbas/MT.html
- ◆ www.camacdonald.com/birding/usmontana.htm
- ◆ www.trails.com/stateactivity.asp?area=11251



Montana-specific Bird Books (because not everything is on the web....)

Montana Birds by Caleb Putnam (Author), Gregory Kennedy (Author)

This compact guide profiles 150 of Montana's most abundant or notable bird species, illustrated in color. You'll also find range maps, a quick reference guide organized into color-coded family groupings and a map of the state's best birding sites. Lone Pine Publishing, Paperback, 176 pp, 2005.

Birds of Montana Field Guide by Stan Tekiela

Organized by color with state-specific range map, this is a field guide. Adventure Publications (MN), Paperback, 353pp, 2004.

Birding Montana (Paperback) by Terry McEneaney (Author)

Written by Terry McEneaney, the staff ornithologist for Yellowstone National Park, this book takes you on a tour of the best birding sites from the west slope of the Rocky Mountains to the eastern prairies, including Glacier and Yellowstone National Parks. Globe Pequot Press, Paperback, 316pp, 1998.



Owl Nesting Web Cams:

- ◆ www.melandsydney.blogspot.com (barn owl - Oceanside, CA)
- ◆ www.starranch.org/blog/barn-owl (barn owl - CA)
- ◆ www.sportsmansparadiseonline.com/bonnieandclyde (on eggs - Chula Vista, CA)
- ◆ www.sportsmansparadiseonline.com/barred_owl (2 owlets - Chula Vista, CA)



Live-streaming Great Blue Heron Nest Cam

- ◆ www.cornell.us2.list-manage.com/track/click?u=b35ddb671faf4a16c0ce32406&id=0465157110&e=7f4f3c13bc

Red-tailed Hawk Nest Cam

- ◆ www.cornell.us2.list-manage1.com/track/click?u=b35ddb671faf4a16c0ce32406&id=07ccbeb5cd&e=7f4f3c13bc



Celebrate Spring With Citizen Science: YardMap and NestWatch

With May flowers—and birds—well on their way back to us, it's a great time to think about a new season of citizen science. Our newest project, YardMap, is perfect for people who enjoy gardening and bird watching. Using simple point-and-click tools, you can map out the parts of your yard while keeping track of the birds that visit it. The data you provide help our scientists understand how neighborhoods function as bird habitat.

Explore YardMap:

- ◆ www.cornell.us2.list-manage.com/track/click?u=b35ddb671faf4a16c0ce32406&id=7866c1dca2&e=7f4f3c13bc



For those who want to take a closer look at nesting robins, wrens, chickadees, swallows, and other backyard birds, NestWatch offers a structured, supportive way to help, with tons of advice on attracting nesters and finding nests.

Explore NestWatch:

- ◆ www.cornell.us2.list-manage.com/track/click?u=b35ddb671faf4a16c0ce32406&id=f10979b504&e=7f4f3c13bc



FROM ASHLEY MASON, FAS CONSERVATION EDUCATOR

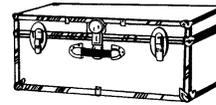
Audubon's New Owl Trunk

Here at Flathead Audubon's Conservation Education Desk, we get regular requests for an Owl Trunk, which we have not had...until now. We are about $\frac{3}{4}$ of the way toward having a beautiful new "Owls of Montana" Educational Trunk that can be checked out by local teachers, educators and community members. In it is a book on the Owls of North America, a field guide to the Owls of Montana, a slide show with the owls of Montana and their common sounds, pictures of owls, a Great Horned Owl Puppet, educational activities for the classroom, a guide to the dissection and identification of owl pellets, magnifying glasses and more.



We are still looking for some materials to complete the trunk. If you have any of the following materials that you would like to donate or would like to donate money to help purchase these materials, we will gladly acknowledge your generosity on the lid of the trunk!

- ◆ Owl feathers
- ◆ Books about owls (I have a list if you are interested)
- ◆ Pictures of owls from calendars and magazines
- ◆ Replica of an owl skull (and/or other owl parts)
- ◆ Magnifying glasses, tweezers, other owl memorabilia or materials



Contact Ashley Mason, FAS Conservation Educator, at AudubonAshley@gmail.com

Help from Americorps

Flathead Audubon is home to eleven wonderful educational trunks that are available to be checked out by local teachers, educators and community members. They cover everything from Hummingbirds, to Common Birds of the Flathead to Riparian Zones and Wetlands. They are extremely popular and are booked into local classrooms throughout April, May and June. With their popularity, they have seen some wear over the years.

NCC Blue 3 to the rescue! Recently, eight of the most wonderful young people you would ever want to meet – Americorps Volunteers – devoted two afternoons to reviving the FAS trunks. They cleaned, they organized, they repaired, they inventoried and made lists of missing items, they attached beautiful new tags and labels and they helped to put together our new Owl Trunk! (They even dissected some pellets!)



Thanks to Emma, Jenny, Hollie, John, Valerie, Carrie, Damani, and Jordan, our trunks are ready for the spring season! Thank you so much!

Beauty of Birds

DON'T FORGET! Learn about local birds through a series of workshops and field study. Topics will include: General bird anatomy, habitats and behavior, local bird identification by sounds, marks, and silhouettes. Participants will also receive local birding maps and other information to make them more informed birders. Here's the schedule:

- ◆ April 10: Introduction to Bird Evolution, Form and Function
- ◆ April 17: Identifying Birds in the Field
- ◆ April 24: The Beauty of Bird Song
- ◆ May 1: Birding Field Trip led by Dan Casey



Classes will be held at Flathead High School from 6:00 – 8:00 PM. The cost for this month-long adventure is only \$10. What a bargain! Please contact Debbie Newman at (406)751-3461 to register or Ashley Mason at AudubonAshley@gmail.com for more information. Hope you can join us!





P.O. Box 9173
Kalispell, MT 59904-9173

APRIL 2013



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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. Meetings start at 7:00PM and include 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: lindawin@centurytel.net**

Website: www.FlatheadAudubon.org

FlockMaster - John Kyle: jkyle@fastmail.us

Conservation Educator - Ashley Mason: AudubonAshley@gmail.com

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443-3949

www.MTAudubon.org
Executive Director: Steve Hoffman
shoffman@mtaudubon.org
Board President: Dan Sullivan
443-4229



FLATHEAD AUDUBON SOCIETY



Membership
Individual or Family

- Basic Membership \$20
(Pays for newsletter and operating costs)
- Supporting Membership \$35
(Extra \$15 funds local projects such as grants, scholarships, meetings, and Christmas Bird Count)
- Additional Donation of \$ _____
to Education Fund
- Owen Sowerwine Fund
- Wherever needed

Name _____

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State _____ Zip Code _____

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