



# The Pileated Post

VOLUME 13

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SEPTEMBER 1988

1988 **SEPTEMBER** 1988

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**BOARD OF DIRECTORS** dinner meeting, 5:30 PM at the Korner Kitchen in Bigfork. Open to all interested members.

**REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING**, Flathead Bank of Bigfork meeting room. 7:30 Business meeting. 8:00 Program: Bob Hensler, planning staff officer with the Flathead National Forest, will present an overview of Forest Service opinion on several issues: the appeals process, wilderness proposals, threatened and endangered species and protection of wildlife habitat. Ask Bob questions, and hear the Forest Service side on these key issues.

**FALL COUNCIL MEETING:** Bozeman. Details inside.

## EDITOR'S DESK

**Leo Keane**

Welcome back! And how was your summer vacation? Or were you able to take on? For some of us, myself included, summer means "making hay while the sun shines", but this year I threw caution to the wind and actually took a couple of weeks off. It was great. I "AMTRAKed" it back to Minnesota and visited the family: took the plunge into Lake Superior's bracing waters, strolled an evening along the mighty St. Croix, fished for bass and walleyes (and caught bullheads) out in front of the house on Lake Washington. In Minnesota, you incline toward water as we in Montana gravitate toward mountains. Especially in a summer like this one... Holy Smokes it was HOT out there! If you didn't venture across the Great Divide you can't imagine. It was like being under siege--an unprecedented (in my lifetime anyway) onslaught of heat and drought, made more sinister by the recognition that this is the way it's going to be: very possibly we are witnessing the first signs of the dreaded GREENHOUSE EFFECT. The intensity and extent of this summer's weather makes it seem like more than a blip on the charts, in fact, it may be the hottest year in recorded history worldwide. If so, if this year is a glimpse of the future, our efforts for clean water, clean air and preservation of habitats will be dust in the winds of enormous environmental changes forthcoming. The cultural ramifications are almost incomprehensible.

But watch, next year will probably go down as the wettest year on record and all of us doomsayers will have to crawl back into our holes. I sure hope so. I'm growing nostalgic for thundershowers. Next year, I hope the lakes and potholes fill to the brim and ducks return in clouds. I hope our streams run bankfull again, our blue-ribbon fisheries replenished. I hope farmers have a banner year, and forest fire fighters go back to painting fences. I hope it rains cats and dogs!



## News from NAS

### A Remarkable Year

By Peter A.A. Berle

President, National Audubon Society

The National Audubon Society, like most Audubon chapters, counts its years from summer to summer. The Society's fiscal year ends June 30th. This year, the budget process had special significance, for just one year ago we had to make cutbacks that included some painful losses of valuable personnel. Understandably, there was a period of turmoil, but, using the same tenacity, ingenuity, and energy that makes this Society such a great conservation organization, Audubon staff and members rallied to deal with the financial crisis. And I'm happy to report that the Audubon of today is healthier and stronger than the organization of one year ago.

We finished this last fiscal year solidly in the black, and the board has approved a balanced budget for the current year. The new budget provides for reestablishment of the Northeast Regional Office. In just one year's time, we have put our financial house in order. We did this by cutting costs and raising \$1.8 million more than in the previous year. But this struggle is not over; given a \$30 million budget last year, we must raise an additional \$1.5 million just to stay even, assuming a 5% inflation rate.

The national board of directors has been restructured, bringing nine chapter-elected members with diverse skills onto this distinguished, policymaking panel.

Regional offices, which were affected by last year's budget cuts, have been augmented by regional teams made up of staff members from every department. While our regional staff is stretched far too thin, the whole organization is gaining a better appreciation of chapter activities through regional team participation. Another important thing has happened: Chapters are giving financial support directly to their regional offices—an investment that will pay back big dividends in chapter effectiveness.

The National Audubon Society has never had stronger programs. By bringing the strengths of every facet of the Society to bear on select issues, we have had a tremendous effect. Our efforts have focused on our five national high-priority campaigns: protecting the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, stopping acid rain, conserving ancient forests, keeping water in the wildlife-rich Platte River, and saving wetlands.

Every department is flexing its muscles. The Capitol Hill office in Washington, D.C., after helping reauthorize a strong Clean Water Act, has been pouring its

energy into reauthorization of two other flagship laws: the Clean Air Act and the Endangered Species Act. As I write this, negotiations are proceeding on both laws. Audubon's legislative analysts continue to work on dozens of other local, regional, national, and international issues. Singlehandedly, Audubon arranged for an appropriation of \$4.2 million to purchase water rights for the Stillwater National Wildlife Refuge in Nevada. This is the first appropriation ever to buy water rights for wildlife.

The **Science Department** is seeing results from its groundbreaking research in areas such as energy policy and wildlife habitat management. The department has weighed in on the Arctic refuge and Platte River debates. In addition to its long-term field research projects, the Science Department is looking ahead to problems such as global climate change and the environmental effects of biotechnology.

The **Sanctuary Department** has had a good year in rounding out some of our protected wildlife habitats. For example, using dedicated donations, we were able to purchase buffer areas around Beidler Sanctuary in South Carolina, a rare, virgin, bald-cypress swamp.

Most chapter members are aware of the success of the **Education Department's** Audubon Adventures program, because chapters sponsor many of the nearly 7,000 classrooms involved. In an exciting new initiative, Audubon educators are reaching out to Native American and inner-city urban children.

Audubon's **Television Specials** now reach more than 20 million people and have won many awards for their excellence. The Television Department is collaborating with the Education Department in developing fascinating new computer software with an environmental education message.

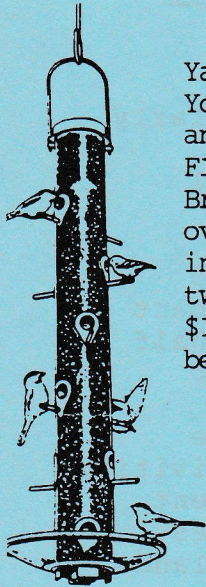
**AUDUBON magazine** remains the most respected and elegant journal in the environmental field. Blockbuster issues on subjects such as the Arctic refuge and California wetlands are used by Audubon staff and members as education lobbying tools.

The **Audubon Activist Network** has grown into a powerful grassroots force that any chapter member can tap. Network members receive the bimonthly newspaper, *Audubon Activist*, and *Action Alerts* directly from the Capitol Hill office when legislative issues reach critical junctures. Membership in this network, which gives you the tools and information necessary to be an effective conservationist, costs \$9 per year.

In all, it has been a remarkable year for the National Audubon Society. With your continued support, next year's report will show even more progress.

FLATHEAD AUDUBON'S ANNUAL SUNFLOWER SEED SALE

Cheery Chickadee



Take down the hummingbird feeders and put up the platforms, gourds, Yankee tubes, Shaner pots or whatever holds your sunflower seeds and suet. You know those blustery fall days will soon be sneaking up on us, and me and some of my pals are getting pretty excited. Be prepared! This year Flathead Audubon will sell only the black, oil sunflower seed in light of Brent Mitchell's extensive observations: us birds go for the black seed over the striped seed hands (wings?) down. Yes, it's true, in this independent survey, birds preferred the high energy punch of the black seed two to one. So please, order yours today. The 50 lb sack still sells for \$15 apiece. They will be delivered in Kalispell on October 15, 1988 and may be picked up at these locations:

- Kalispell, Kalispell Center Mall, 10:00-12:00 AM
- Bigfork, Lakehills Shopping Center, 9:00-11:00 AM
- Columbia Falls, Glacier Bank, 10:00-1:00 PM
- Whitefish, Train Depot Parking Lot, 11:00-1:00 PM
- Polson, B & B Shopping Center, 11:00-1:00 PM
- Condon, call June Ash at 754-2289 for time and place

By the way, why don't you cut out this notice and stick it to your refrigerator just so you don't forget to pick up your seeds. This is the only chance to pick up the seeds so if you can't make it that day be sure to have a friend get them for you. Order plenty because you know how much those evening grosspigs can go through in a day. Goodness!

SUNFLOWER SEED ORDER FORM

(Please Print)

NAME \_\_\_\_\_ PHONE \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

Number of sacks      BLACK, OIL SUNFLOWER SEEDS      Amt. enclosed

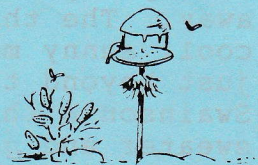
\_\_\_\_\_      50 lb sack at \$15      \_\_\_\_\_

I will pick up my seeds in:

Bigfork\_\_ Kalispell\_\_ Columbia Falls\_\_ Wfish\_\_ Polson\_\_ Condon\_\_

Send check and order to: **FLATHEAD AUDUBON SOCIETY**  
(due October 6)      P.O. BOX 715  
BIGFORK, MONTANA 59911

Are you a member \_\_\_\_\_ or a non-member \_\_\_\_\_ ?



### Constructive Changes in Public Land Agencies

Harsh criticism of the public land managing agencies, particularly of the Forest Service, is a common thing these days. Undoubtedly, some of the criticism is deserved. However, there are many hopeful signs of constructive changes within the Forest Service and other agencies that ought to be given credit.

Agency participation in the Flathead Basin Commission has been positive. The recent announcement of a three year study of the impact of forestry practices on water quality in the Flathead basin, one half of the funding coming from the Forest Service, is an important step in a critical land use situation.

Forest and watershed cooperatives formed by public and private land managers to provide for better coordination of management activities in areas with checker-board ownership is another positive development that could lead to better managed forests and watersheds. The Forest Service is now taking into account practices on adjoining private lands as public land decisions are made. This wasn't always the case.

In recent land unit analysis in the Swan Valley, Swan Lake Ranger District and Flathead Forest personnel have been making diligent efforts to reach management decisions that take into account the variety of values and interests involved in forest use. The decision makers, it seems to me, are showing much consideration for protection of prime wildlife habitat and old growth.

Of particular interest and hopefulness in connection with the Swan Valley areas is the participation of Forest Service representatives in an ongoing discussion with a small group composed of forest industry and conservation group representatives. There appears to be a new commitment from the Forest Service to broaden the base of its decision making.

Conservationists may not always agree with the final decisions, but a willingness on the part of public land managers to strive for a real balance in protecting the many values of the public land is progress.

#### POLITICAL NOTE

Election time is fast approaching. Conservationists have a vital stake in the results at all levels of government. If we want adequate protection and wise use of our public lands, we need to elect folks with sympathy for and, hopefully, knowledge of environmental issues.

As voters we must seek out the conservation records and positions of candidates from President to county commissioner and vote accordingly.

**MIGRATION** time is upon us. Many birds are now underway, here in this first week of September. The hummingbirds have mostly departed. Swallows are staging and beginning to trickle away. The thrushes--bluebirds and robins--you may see these cool, sunny mornings in large, loose flocks winging southward just beyond the treetops. Another thrush you won't see--Swainson's thrush migrates at night. But if you pull on a wool sweater and go out under the stars one of these clear fall evenings, you may very likely hear him: a single, soft, plaintive note, a diffusive sound, as though it were sifting down from the stars. For me, it is a call that brings an autumn night to life.

Leo Keane

## Honing up on Hummers



Flathead Audubon's Elly Jones of Swan lake began a new birding project this spring--banding hummingbirds, about 300 to date. She was somewhat dismayed when the bands arrived as a thin aluminum postcard with the tiny bands stamped into it, ready to be cut apart with scissors. Fitting the bands onto those tiny legs was a good trick too!

On August 5th a hummingbird researcher telephoned Elly to tell her that he had captured an immature female rufous hummingbird which had been banded by Elly on July 25 of this year. It was captured near Gothic, Colorado at an alpine elevation just eleven days after Elly's banding. If this hummer had followed the Continental Divide (the typical migration path for this species) she would have logged about 1000 miles on this trip--nearly 100 miles per day, fair mileage for a bird weighing in at just over three grams, and with a wingspan of four inches.

Also this summer Elly recaptured a female calliope hummingbird banded in 1982 by Dr. Bill Calder. Elly's work with hummers is valuable to science and interesting to all of us.

Robin Magaddino

**MONTANA AUDUBON COUNCIL  
FALL MEETING  
BOZEMAN  
SEPT. 30-OCT. 2, 1988**

The fall meeting of the Montana Audubon Council will be hosted by the Sacajawea Audubon Society in Bozeman on September 30 thru October 2, 1988. Please make your accommodation plans early because of a home football (MSU) game this same weekend. Estimate \$20-\$25 for registration fees which will include the Friday social, the buffet lunch, and the banquet dinner. Inquire with Robin Magaddino for the complete agenda and field trips.

## RARE BIRDS:

### A Few Unusual Sightings from the Summer of '88

**European goldfinch**—This was a remarkable sighting for Vinnie and Carol Contreras and Murry and Jan Graham who watched the goldfinch for several hours at the Contreras' bird feeder in Martin City this past early May. Documentation includes a field sketch by Jan Graham and several photographs. The Audubon Encyclopedia of North American Birds reports the European goldfinch as introduced to Hoboken N.J. circa 1900 but that there are very few recent records, including one in Pennsylvania in 1961 and one in Ohio in 1966. Possibly this Martin City sighting was of an escaped captive bird. Either way it was an exciting bird for the Contreras and the Grahams. We thank them for reporting this European goldfinch to Flathead Audubon.

### **lark bunting and red-headed woodpecker**—

Robert O'Brien, who has a summer home near Blankenship Bridge on the North Fork, made positive identifications of these two species near his home this early summer. Both of these are considered eastern birds, that is, the field guides and Encyclopedia report of them as occurring only east of the Continental Divide. The lark bunting is a common species of the short grass prairie, while the red-headed woodpecker is a diminishing species, suffering from the loss of its favored habitat--oak savannah of the tall grass prairie. It's interesting to imagine what wind or wanderlust carried them over to our mountain valley.

**bobwhite quail**—A pair of bobwhites, identified by myself (Leo Keane) and my brother (Matt Keane) appeared on my front lawn one afternoon in early August. Our neighborhood is on the edge of Whitefish bordering an area of woodland and fields where it is not so unusual to see pheasants or grouse but a pair of bobwhites was very surprising and perplexing. My range maps don't show them occurring anywhere in Montana, though we occasionally hear of quail in the Lower Valley area. My best guess is that these may have been a released pair.





1989 FLATHEAD AUDUBON SOCIETY DIRECTORY

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Vice-President	Jack White, 1235 Swan River Road, Bigfork MT 59911	837-6157
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Bob Ballou, Box 11881, Rt.1, Charlo, MT 59825	644-2365
Bob Shennum, 2888 Swan Hwy., Bigfork, MT 59911	837-6208
Lynn Kelly, P.O. Box 2289, Polson, MT 59860	883-5797

CHAIRS

Conservation	Rod Ash, Box 957, Condon, MT 59826	754-2289
Education	Jim Rogers, Box 984, Polson, MT 59860	883-3611
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Audubon Adventures/ Library	Nancy Trembath, 6065 MT Hwy 35, Bigfork, MT 59911	837-6298
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Newsletter	Leo Keane, 514 Pine Place, Whitefish, MT 59937	862-5807
Program	Brent Michell, 960 Kienas Rd., Kalsipell, MT 59901	756-8130
Schools/Clubs	Jean Robacker, 1655 Montford Road, Kalispell, MT 59901	756-6344

National Audubon Society

CHAPTER  
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Yes, I'd like to join. Local Chapter:

FLATHEAD AUDUBON N 54 7XCH8

Mail to: NATIONAL AUDUBON SOCIETY  
Chapter Membership Data Center  
P.O. Box 51001  
Boulder, Colorado 80322-1001

INTRODUCTORY MEMBERSHIP

\$20

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Please allow 4-8 weeks for delivery of your first issue.

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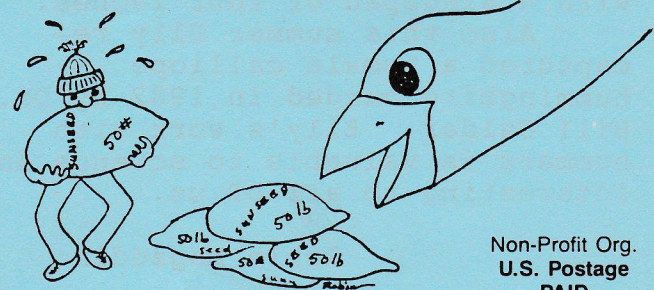
THE FLATHEAD AUDUBON SOCIETY meets on the second Monday of each month from September through May. Regular monthly meetings are preceded by an Executive Board meeting, the time and location of which are published in the preceding newsletter. The business meeting (7:30) and program (8:00) are held in the downstairs meeting room of the Flathead Bank of Bigfork. These are all open meetings and all interested people are invited to attend.

THE PILEATED POST is published nine times a year, September through May, and is sent to all members of the Flathead Audubon Society as one benefit of National Dues. For others who would like to receive the newsletter, the cost is \$4.00 per year.

**SUNFLOWER SEEDS!**

**OCTOBER 15**

**• ORDER FORM INSIDE •**



**FLATHEAD AUDUBON SOCIETY**

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