



Wildlife in Winter

As we stay in our warm homes at night, we might wonder what the wildlife is doing out there in the forest. Animals have evolved for billions of years to live and reproduce in seasonal and diurnal changes. Winter is the time to rest. To recuperate. To sleep. To Dream. And, for some, to die.

Some birds and small mammals will clump together for warmth, often in cavities, brush piles, cave or structures. They fluff their feathers or their fur to insulate them from the cold. Animals such as beavers, otters, min and waterfowl coat their fur or feathers with oil to help insulate from cold and moisture. Muskrats preheat themselves by dancing before going swimming under the ice.

Some animals gain fat through the summer and fall and hibernate through the cold of winter. Bears are not true hibernators, but rather maintain their body temperature, stop eating, drinking and defecating, and spend winters in a warm den. Pregnant female bears give birth to tiny cubs while they are in a torpor state. Birds that don't migrate must feed enough throughout the day to keep them warm and alive through the night. Mountain chickadees can survive to 50 below by sitting and shivering all night.

Predators seek out the weak and unprepared animals to prey on for survival or find carrion to help them survive. Ruffed grouse burrow in the snow and can keep their snow cave above 20 degrees, no matter what the outside temperature. Flying squirrels sleep communally up to twenty in single gender groups. Voles travel and reproduce under the bottom layer of snow. Painted turtles buried in streamside

mud stretch out their legs to absorb more oxygen through their skin. Some insects can burrow deep in the ground or under bark and slow down their metabolism to allow them to freeze without dying. Wood frogs increase their blood glucose up to 100 times normal to keep them alive at temperatures as low as 15 degrees. Their bodies freeze into little "frogsickles" without causing death.

Darkness brings rest and recuperation. It is essential for the brain to have a quiet period of sleep to process activities from the day. For nocturnal birds and mammals, the dark is the time they have an advantage to feed when competition is least and prey is more vulnerable.

An important concern is the recent increase of artificial light. The response of animals and birds to light is deeply embedded in their DNA. Extended light impacts the feeding, breeding and migration patterns of many types of wildlife. Artificial light artificially attracts birds and insects, causing abnormally high concentrations of animals around lit buildings. Some birds and insects have flown in circles around lights until they die of exhaustion. The full impact of artificial light is just being investigated, but light pollution definitely is causing change.

Tonight, embrace the dark. Feel the cold. Look at the stars. Rekindle your thoughts. Shut off your exterior lights. Turn down your heat. Sleep longer. Shamanic culture believes the hibernating spirit bear is guarding our dreams. Tonight, let's wish for sweet dreams.

by Carole Jorgenson, Jill Fanning, Denny Olson

In Memory of Lois Drobish

Lois Drobish, long time hostess of Flathead Audubon's monthly meetings, passed away the evening of November 19, 2018, peacefully, with her family by her side.

Lois served for 20 years on the Flathead Audubon Hospitality Committee, 16 of those as Chair.
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JANUARY FLATHEAD AUDUBON CALENDAR

Monday, January 7, 2019. 6 PM. FAS Board of Directors Meeting, Gateway Community Center, US Hwy 2 West, Kalispell. All welcome.

Monday, January 14, 2019. 7 PM. Flathead Audubon General Meeting, Gateway Community Center, US Hwy 2 West, Kalispell. All welcome. See page 3.

Saturday, January 12, 2019. Animal Tracking and Sign Interpretation Day, see page 5 for details.

BIRD OF THE MONTH

Great Horned Owl

by Lisa Bate

Few birds have the incredibly intense reputation of the Great Horned Owl. Large, tough, strong, and capable of silent flight, these birds are hunting sleuths. Their powerful talons can apply 28 pounds of force while holding their prey. Their sharp beaks are lethal and effective for snapping spinal cords and ripping flesh apart. They feed upon the widest variety of prey of any American owl. Their diet varies depending on where they live, but prey items can include rodents, hares, rabbits, reptiles, arthropods, ducks, coots, songbirds, other raptors, cats, and even skunks. Owls cannot digest bones, however, so need to regurgitate pellets regularly in order that sharp items do not pass through the digestive track.

Great Horned Owls are such a formidable predator that people use plastic replicas of them to deter other birds from landing on power poles and buildings. At the Jewel Basin Hawk Watch site, a plastic owl is "perched" on a tree on the ridge. Other raptors see the plastic owl as a threat and come in to take swipes at it. This provides observers with incredible entertainment, but more importantly, a close-up view of migrating raptors for species identification.

Great Horned Owls have acute hearing, but it is their vision that really sets them apart. They have enormous, gorgeous, eyes, larger than all other owls. Human eyes would be the size of grapefruits if we had the same proportion of eye to skull volume. They cannot move their eyes, so turn their heads instead. They can rotate their heads up to 280 degrees. The back of their eyes are specially equipped with high numbers of specialized photoreceptors called rods. These receptors allow them to see extremely well in low-light conditions. This enables them to hunt at night and during crepuscular hours (dusk and dawn), when their prey cannot see them coming.

The other unique adaptation that allows Great Horned Owls to be such effective hunters is their wings. They fly silently. This allows owls to grab their prey before they even know the owl is near. We can hear most birds flapping as they fly overhead because the air rushing over the surface of the wings causes



turbulence, or noise. Owl wings are different. The tips of their primaries, or wing tips, are soft and serrated (like a comb). This breaks up the turbulence by allowing the air to pass through the tips of the feathers.

Great Horned Owls have the most extensive range of any American owl, and are equally at home in forests, as they are in suburbia, grasslands, and deserts. They range into Alaska and Canada in forests to tree line, and south into Central America and even parts of South America.

Great Horned Owls get their scientific name, *Bubo virginianus*, from the Latin word *Bubo* meaning "owl" or the Greek word for "eagle owl". *Virginianus* is in reference to the state of Virginia where the first specimen was collected. These are large, stocky owls with females standing nearly 24 inches tall with a wingspan of 56 inches. The males are slightly smaller. Much of their size is simply "fluff" though, as they only weigh about 3 pounds. They are cryptically colored:

mottled gray-brown on their backs and rusty brown and heavily barred on the chest and belly. They have yellow eyes and a black bill. The most distinguishing characteristic of these owls, however, are their "ear" tufts, which actually have nothing to do with hearing. Long-eared owls also have ear tufts, but are considerably smaller and thinner.

Their hooting calls are the makings of mystery stories that occur in the dark. In reality though, they hoot to defend their territories and attract mates. They can mate for life. Their calls are soft, deep hoots (https://www.allaboutbirds.org/guide/Great_Horned_Owl/sounds) with an irregular rhythm: hoo-h'HOO-hoo-hoo. The female calls are noticeably higher than the male calls. The young "screech or scream" for food, likely leaving many a camper wondering what creature or space alien was around. Campgrounds are a great place to listen for owls as they prey upon all the small rodents that thrive on food morsels dropped by campers.

Great Horned Owls are *great* at many things, but nest building is not one of them. They most commonly use tree nests of other species. They will also

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January Program

Prairie Bandits: The Story of Montana's Black-footed Ferrets. presented by John Ashley

John Ashley will present Flathead Audubon's evening program on Monday, 14 January at 7 PM in the Gateway Community Room in Kalispell. The program is free and open to the public.

Black-footed ferrets are Montana's rarest native mammal. John will begin the program with a historical review of Black-footed Ferrets in North America, focusing on ferrets in Montana. After providing a summary of ferret biology and ecology, John will share some of his experiences as a volunteer working with ferret biologists and photographing this endangered and enigmatic species over the past few years on



John Ashley photo

the Charles M. Russell National Wildlife Refuge. John will conclude his slide and video presentation with an overview of the conservation struggles and challenges facing the survival of Black-footed Ferrets in the prairie dog towns across the Great Plains.

John Ashley is a wildlife biologist, author, and photographer who lives with his wife and business partner, Tracy, and their dogs at the end of the road just past Kila in northwestern Montana.



John Ashley photo

Flathead Audubon Support Options

With the new tax law changes, many people are struggling to figure out how they can support their favorite nonprofit groups in other ways than a cash donation. Although I'm definitely not a lawyer or CPA, over the next few Pileated Post issues, I will try to pass on a few methods that might help you translate your support for Flathead Audubon into a contribution that keeps your budget in the black.

This month's suggestion is to name Flathead Audubon in your will. It seems simple and it is. Ask your attorney to list Flathead Audubon as a recipient

of a bit of your estate. You pick the size of the "bit." It is usually easier to name a percent than a dollar amount, so that when you win the lottery, all of your beneficiary amounts automatically adjust.

You will need the following information:

Flathead Audubon Society
P.O. Box 9173
Kalispell, MT 59904
Tax ID #: 81-0447830

by Kay Mitchell, President

CHIRPS & SQUAWKS

Highlights from December 3, 2018 Board Meeting

- ◇ Kay Mitchell reported that a group of 4th-6th grade girls named "Girls Who Code" are working on a project to make the bird call CD's downloadable for mobile use.
- ◇ Denny Olson and the Education Committee will start some preliminary work on creating a mentoring program between older and younger students, by doing fact-finding, brain-storming curriculum, and holding discussions with school principals. A Murdock Foundation grant would be sought to fund this undertaking.
- ◇ The Grants Committee is working on Jewel Basin Hawk Watch for next year, and on maintenance and trail plans for Owen-Sowerwine Natural Area.
- ◇ Jake Bramante and Joe Batts having been doing work to ensure that data, accounts, and websites for FAS have security that is up-to-date.

PHENOLOGY NOTE

Our Harlequin Ducks are now feeding in heavy surf on the Pacific Coast.

Check out <https://www.birdsbesafe.com/> for a commercial cat collar that may help significantly reduce the number of birds caught by cats.



Conservation Educator's Niche

By Denny Olson

"The last word in ignorance is the man who says of an animal or plant, 'What good is it?' Who but a fool would discard seemingly useless parts? To keep every cog and wheel is the first precaution of intelligent tinkering." Aldo Leopold

One of the things that my Dad could always do, and I considered it almost magical through much of my childhood, was to take apart a broken complex mechanical thing, assess the problem inside, and fix it. This happened over and over, usually with objects that, at the beginning of the process, he knew nothing about.



My curiosity was such that I watched carefully as he did this magic. Although I didn't know it at the time, I was applying the same principles of observation and organizing to analyzing his task as he was to fixing the piece of equipment. I noticed that the parts were put on in a sequence – first to last, and his opening task was to undo the process -- *last to first*.

Then I noticed something more subtle. There was not a random scattering of parts as they were peeled layer by layer. The placement of the parts on the table was organized by their relationships. In my Dad's brain, he was placing things specifically so he could remember the first to last in the later reconstruction. It was never the same kind of arrangement – say left to right – for each job, but each time there was a pattern to it.

He would eventually recognize the offending part, or the improper relationship between parts, fix it, or toss it because the repair was not worth the replacement cost. Sometimes there was nothing broken, but the relationship between parts was out of place. An easy fix.

My first car as a late teenager was an "Oldsmobile", in every sense of the word. It was an old pink hardtop "boat", that would have floated down the road in cushy luxury had its engine been a smooth runner. It wasn't. I decided to do some intelligent tinkering. Halfway through the process of taking apart the entire engine, I realized two things. One, the intake valves were scored and burned, and could be fixed with a re-grinding down the block at Bill-the-mechanic's shop. The second realization, and it did raise the neck hairs a bit, was that I was my Father, for better or worse. From him I also inherited an ability to imagine harmonies to new music and sing them, and to pour myself into work that I liked -- as well as some parts that didn't work, like letting anger build from frustration and feeling poorly about myself, and being helplessly tongue-tied with defensiveness when someone was wrong about me.

Fixing or replacing the parts that didn't work allowed my cushy Olds boat to float down the road to my girlfriend's house in a different town. It was great freedom. The metaphorical "parts" in maturing have taken more time, but the road is smoothing. I just had to figure out what to keep, and what to replace.

The same principles are, of course applicable to the rethinking of culture and education. To make it work, to float the evolution of education down the road, we need realize what we must discard or repair, and what already works for us. I'm a nature educator by lifelong commitment. I do think closeness to nature is keystone to mental health and clarity, as well as learning, but I have a list of other "parts to keep" in the work of educating our kids and ourselves.

There is little intelligent debate about things we can do without. Most of us don't really want our culture and the attached-at-the-hip public education system to be defined by hyper-materialism, selfishness as a positive attribute, lack of empathy and altruism, short-term non-critical thinking, isolation from our families and friends, worship of celebrity, sports as obsession instead of a fun diversion, violence as a viable alternative to problems that are mostly internal and personal, massive economic disparity between haves and have-nots, or drifting away from democratic political processes. Those parts can be given the "buh-bye" without much damage to our American culture and education.

The parts to *keep* represent the best that humans and communities can be – altruistic, kind, giving, loving, patient – and also the other qualities in the education system that actually work, and probably always will.

Education happens all the time. We experience things, sometimes painfully and sometimes joyously. We learn from the experiences. And it is important to remember that there is a lot that is *right* about the ways that learning happens, whether those ways are called "education" or not. We should not ignore time-tested, even prehistoric, pathways that humans have always used to become better people.

As a teaching naturalist, my checklist of parts to keep, or educational methods to practice, are: 1) outdoor play, 2) carefully observing and learning from nature, 3) storytelling, 4) reading to children at all ages, 5) mentoring, 6) providing solitude, 7) humor, 8) surprise, 9) emotion, 10) early and often physical exercise, 11) the arts (including music and rhythm), and 12) the "consumer science" training for everyday life – all of these are the babies to pluck safely and

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WINTER FIELD TRIPS FOR YOU!

All Flathead Audubon field trips are free and open to the public and are geared for all ages and levels of field experience. They are led by area biologists, retired professionals, and some of the best birders in the region. Please read our field trip guidelines at www.FlatheadAudubon.org. 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. All drivers must have their own vehicle insurance. For more information, contact Kathy Ross at 837-3837 or Cory Davis at 257-3166, or the individual field trip leader listed below. Also, a free brochure, "Birding Hotspots of the Flathead" is available at the Flathead Audubon general meetings and on www.FlatheadAudubon.org.



ANIMAL TRACKING AND SIGN INTERPRETATION DAY, Saturday, January 12th, 2019 9 AM-2:30 PM.

Winter is a great time to improve the outdoor skills of identifying wild animals and their behavior by understanding the oldest writing known on the earth, animal tracking! Join experienced tracker and wildlife researcher Brian Baxter as we search for clues and evidence in the nooks and crannies of one of the Flathead Valley's most beautiful and rich riparian areas. Baxter has over 40 years working professionally in wildlife, forestry, and outdoor education. This outdoor education class is sponsored by Silver Cloud Associates, Flathead Audubon, and Montana Audubon. Please come prepared for the day with proper layers of winter clothing, good winter boots, snowshoes if you have them, water, lunch, binoculars and cameras. The hiking is moderate, with relatively flat terrain, a few steep cut banks, and about two and a half miles round trip. Ski poles or hiking poles are handy to negotiate the riverbanks. To sign up for this free class contact Brian at email: b_baxter53@yahoo.com or call him at: 406-291-2154. Space is limited so please register to find out more info on location to meet, and please plan to attend if you sign up. Brian's teaching style is hands on, informative and scientific, but he does add a sense of humor and enjoyment that should contribute to making it a fun and memorable day!

WINTER BIRDS AND TRACKS WITH DENNY OLSON, Saturday, February 9, 2019 10:00 AM-noon. Join FAS Conservation Educator and long-time teaching naturalist Denny Olson on a winter hike in Kalispell. Winter birds, bird songs, tracking, botanizing, and seat-of-the-pants interpretation will be the unstructured itinerary. This is one of the best spots in the area to see Pileated and other woodpeckers, many kinds of chickadees, Bohemian and Cedar waxwings in flocks of thousands, Pine Grosbeaks, Townsend's Solitaires -- and there's always an unexpected bird. Not just ID, but lots of natural history lore, which is Denny's trademark. Dress warm, bring binoculars and snow boots, and check with us on the need for snowshoes if the snow is deep. We have binoculars and field guides if you need them. Call Denny at 249-3987, or contact at auduboneducator@gmail.com to register and get directions.

THE GREAT BACKYARD BIRD COUNT, A Field Trip For Kids And All Ages, EXPLORING THE BIGFORK AND SWAN RIVER AREA, Sunday, February 17, 2019, 10 AM-1 PM. Join us for an exciting morning of birding and learning about our winter avian residents in this area. We will visit local feeders to ID and count our wintering songbirds as part of a yearly nation-wide Citizen Scientist project. Expect to see three species of chickadees, Golden-crowned Kinglets, along with many other feeder surprises. Exploring the river corridor by car we hope to see Trumpeter Swans, Bald Eagles and perhaps our resident Pygmy Owls. Excellent outing for families with children as well as bird lovers of all ages. Minimal walking to some viewing areas and short periods of standing. Dress warmly, bring binoculars and/or spotting scopes. Contact Kathy Ross for information and to sign up, 406-837-3837 or mtkat67@gmail.com.

FUR AND FEATHERS, TRACKING AND BIRDING THE SWAN RIVER REFUGE WITH DIANE BOYD, Saturday, February 23, 2019, meeting 9:30 AM (Kalispell) or 10 AM (Bigfork). Join wildlife biologist, Diane Boyd and FAS for a day of adventure, on skis or snowshoes, in the Swan Refuge winter wonderland. Diane's experienced tracking skills will bring alive the stories written in the snow of otters, raptors, weasels, coyotes and other refuge residents. Be prepared for winter conditions. The field trip will cover anywhere from 1-5 miles of snow covered landscape and approximately 3- 4 hours on the refuge depending on conditions. Bring a lunch, water, appropriate winter gear and binoculars. For more information and to sign up contact Diane at 406-470-2832 or dianekboyd@gmail.com. Trip limited to 12 participants.

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PHENOLOGY NOTE

Great Horned Owls are hooting as part of their mating ritual.

THE GREAT BACKYARD BIRD COUNT

You Can Be Part Of The Team—Every Bird Counts

The 22nd annual Great Backyard Bird Count (GBBC) takes place February 15-18, 2019. The GBBC is a free, fun and easy nationwide event that engages bird appreciators of all ages in counting birds to create a real time snapshot of bird populations around the world. Participants are asked to count birds for as little as 15 minutes or spend the day (as long as you wish) on one or more days of the four-day event and then report their sightings on line at birdcount.org. All the instructions to participate are on this website, along

with lots of bird-wise information and a photo contest you can enter. Anyone can take part in the GBBC from beginning bird watchers to experts and you can participate from your own backyard or any where around the world. If you know a local teacher in the valley, consider FAS Adopt-a-School (or classroom) program. The GBBC is a great way to engage young people in the world around them. For more information contact Kathy @837-3837. Become a Citizen Scientist in your own backyard. You count, every bird counts!

Bigfork CBC 2018

The 45th annual Bigfork Christmas Bird Count was held Saturday, December 15th, under cloudy skies, periodic "snow bands," and strong SSE winds (10-17 mph) in the morning. The afternoon weather conditions were considerably better for birding, with good visibility and diminished winds. Snow depths were non-existent and/or limited to the eastern edges of the count circle; temperatures ranged from 32-43 degrees F. Rivers and lakes were mostly open and there was no ice on Flathead Lake. Thirty-three volunteer participants counted **17,722** individual birds of **87 species**, down from a record 98 species recorded last year. The overall number of birds decreased from last year's total of 18,847 birds. There were no new bird

species found this year on the count. Highlights were a **Double-crested Cormorant, Snow Geese, Spotted Towhee, White-crowned Sparrow, and a Yellow-headed Blackbird**. There was one Coopers Hawk, Sharp-shinned Hawk, and an American Kestrel observed during count week. We had a record high of 202 Canvasbacks, 2240 Redheads, 5 (tied) Wilson Snipes, 269 Red-breasted Nuthatches, 161 Dark-eyed Juncos, and 358 Pine Siskins. for the count. Thank you to all the wonderful participants who helped make the Bigfork CBC count a very enjoyable experience!

by Craig Hohenberger, compiler
asoleado2003@yahoo.com

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FREEZOUT LAKE AND THE SNOW GEESE MIGRATION, March 23-24, 2019. The Snow Geese are moving from their California wintering grounds to their arctic nesting areas along with thousands of other waterfowl. There is nothing like Snow Geese and the Rocky Mountains at the same time and place. The place is Freezout Lake near Choteau; the time is the annual Flathead Audubon field trip. We will meet on Saturday morning at 10 AM, caravan/carpool to Choteau and arrive in time for the afternoon "fly-out." After spending a night in Choteau, we will head back out just before daybreak to watch the "mass ascension" of geese from the ponds of Freezout. After the morning's birding, we, too, will head home in the early afternoon arriving in Kalispell around 5 PM on Sunday. Bob Lee will provide a suggested schedule and route, and will be in the front of the group. Participants may choose to pursue the geese on their own as much or as little as they, the weather and the birds allow. Please make your own arrangements for lodging; primitive camping is available at Freezout WMA. Motel options include the Stage Stop (406-466-5900), Gunther (406-466-5444) and Big Sky (406-466-5318). Make your reservations early as these hotels will likely fill up. For more information, including the meeting location, contact Bob Lee at 270-0371 or RML3@centurytel.net.

Study Finds Mountain Birds Are on an Escalator to Extinction

Warming temperatures forcing an upward shift

Warmer temperatures are pushing mountain-dwelling birds ever higher as they try to stay in their comfort zone. That's the conclusion of a group of scientists who retraced the steps of a 1985 expedition in the Peruvian Andes and documented how birds had shifted in the intervening 30 years. The new study also shows that species that were already living on the ridge-top now have smaller ranges and some have disappeared altogether compared with the 1985 sur-

vey. The study, by University of British Columbia and Cornell Lab of Ornithology scientists, appears in *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*. "Mountaintop species are running out of mountain," says Benjamin Freeman, lead author and postdoctoral fellow at the University of British Columbia. "The next step is extinction. Of the 16 mountaintop species found in the last survey, 8 are missing from our new survey." *from Cornell Lab of Ornithology*

Lois Drobish continued from page 1.

She was a valued participant in our monthly Board meetings over the last decade, and for 15 years served as tracker of the volunteers at the Owen Sowerwine work day .

Earlier in November, the Flathead Audubon board voted to officially recognize Lois for this outstanding service to the chapter. The front page of the December Pileated Post was devoted to recounting Lois's service to the chapter, as part of announcing the Recognition award. The plan was to present the Recognition Certificate to her in the hospital on November 20. After she slipped away the evening before, the Certificate was presented on the 20th to her sons, Hart and Kip.

Lois was above all a kind, gentle, and caring person. She spent many hours keeping in touch with

and helping out her many friends in the Flathead and around the country, including the members of her Flathead Audubon family. She was also devoted to helping and protecting wild creatures, and often took direct action to support some of her favorite species – writing letters to urge protection of Montana's wolves, for example, and to ask for restrictions on the pesticides affecting declining populations of pollinator bees. Most recently, she distributed milkweed seeds to anyone who promised to plant them, in order to help migrating Monarch butterflies. Her devotion to her friends and her stewardship of nature will be sorely missed. All are invited to a memorial for Lois on Sunday, February 17, at Glacier Unitarian Universalist Fellowship Hall, 1515 Trumble Creek Rd, Kalispell. There will be a potluck at 11:30, followed by the memorial at noon.

by Linda Winnie

Great Horned Owl continued from page 2

nest in cavities in trees, snags, cacti, on cliffs, buildings, artificial platforms, or even on the ground adding little, if any, materials. Great Horned Owls will nest earlier the further north they live. Incubating females can maintain eggs at 98.6° F even when the ambient temperature is nearly -30° F due to their soft insulating feathers being so efficient.

In Montana, Great Horned Owls begin nesting in February, and courtship hooting can start as early as January. They typically lay 1 to 4 eggs with the first egg being the largest. Eggs hatch after about 30 days asynchronously, meaning not together. This results in the first-born chick, being larger than the other chicks. When food is plentiful, all chicks may survive to fledge. When food is scarce, however, only the oldest

(largest) chicks survive as they easily out compete their siblings for food. The chicks fledge in 5-7 weeks.

Great Horned Owl populations throughout the state and world are stable. In some areas, however, owls are vulnerable to pesticide or rodenticide poisoning as folks try to get rid of mice, voles, or gophers in their yards or fields. This in turn, poisons the foraging owl. A safe alternative is to raise a hawk pole from which owls can hunt, or use snap traps, to control rodent populations. Another risk to owls is vehicle collisions. Roads function as a type of smorgasbord with all the rodents crossing them at night. Driving slower at night can help reduce vehicle collisions with owls and all wildlife species. So give them a "brake" and watch for this magnificent predator of the night!

Conservation Educator's Niche continued from page 4
preserve from the cultural bathwater.

This list can and should be a powerful starting place for further improving schools and strengthening the already solid foundations of American culture. And they are a constant reminder that in conservation and environmental education, none of them exist apart from the whole. Just as I preach "everything is connected to everything else" in my Audubon work, I can't afford to forget that every educational method is also

interwoven in a complex cultural matrix – and I should use them all.

This is remedial, of course. If I was a Native American, or even indigenous on another continent, I would grow up with the from-birth cultural assumption that every thing and every action is connected to all others, even seven generations down the road. So, intellectually, emotionally and professionally, I'm headed that way -- in my Oldsmobile.

Education Committee Trunk Training Opportunity

Audubon members are invited to a training to learn about the contents of FAS's educational trunks. We will share the materials from three or four trunks, the contents of which feature birds, climate and conservation. Participants will learn how to present educational trunks to area groups such as schools, community organizations and senior centers. Another way to help is to learn how to become an Audubon "Ambassador". These folks shuttle trunks to and from

reserved locations, a valuable service to groups who use the trunks. We hope you'll join us in this community outreach!

- Location: Lone Pine State Park office, 300 Lone Pine Road, Kalispell
- Date/Time: January 7, 2019, 1-4 PM
- R.S.V.P.: Gail Linne, gslinne@centurytel.net

Get Ready Audubon Chapters Montana's 66th Legislature is Set to Convene January 7th

In less than a month, the 66th Montana Legislature will convene, launching Montana Audubon into a four-month frenzy of researching, strategizing, testifying, and lobbying on bills that affect Montana's wildlife, wildlife habitat, and bedrock environmental laws. With a federal backdrop of attacks on the Endangered Species Act, Sage Grouse conservation plans, the Migratory Bird Treaty Act, and the Clean Water Rule, we are likely to see emboldened attacks on state-level regulations at home. We already know that a number of challenges to our primary conservation issues are coming. This includes challenges to the continuation of the Habitat Montana program (a Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks habitat protection program), challenges to the state Greater Sage-grouse conservation program, challenges to conservation easements and keeping public lands in public hands, and challenges to increasing clean energy emphasis and climate change solutions.

Affecting state policy is not easy. That's why we are excited to announce the Montana-raised and educated (as a recent University of Montana graduate) Wyatt Smith, as our 2019 Legislative Assistant. With this added capacity, you can be sure that our Montana Audubon team will be in the halls every day fighting challenges to conservation, and supporting proactive legislation and sufficient budgets to protect our wildlife, our public lands, and to keep our outdoor heritage intact. As always, one of our priorities will be preventing the rollback of existing public safeguards and state environmental standards. Unfortunately, we have to work hard each session to prevent these rollbacks, by defeating or weakening dozens of bills that would lessen protections for our state's water, air, wildlife habitat, and public participation and transparency in government. Our team will also do our best to bring you, our fellow advocates, the information you

need to raise your voice. During the session, we will help host a handful of citizen lobby days (usually one a month), and we will maintain an active "Action Alert Network" to deliver weekly updates on legislative priorities and how you can help.

Each of us has a lot to lose if we don't act. You can support Montana Audubon's valuable legislative work in three primary ways:

- ◆ Donate to help support face-to-face contact with legislators, send action alerts at critical times, and defend Montana's natural heritage.
 - ◆ sign up for our action alert network by visiting www.mtaudubon.org – and encourage others in your chapter to join!
 - ◆ spend a day at the Capitol lobbying by our side
- And, don't forget, you can do all three!

Here is a little more about Wyatt whom we are excited to welcome to our team. Wyatt Smith is a native Montanan who grew up in Missoula and has spent time living in Seattle, WA, Kenai, AK, and Cork, Ireland. Wyatt graduated from the University of Montana with a double major in Economics and Political Science in the spring of 2018. During college, he led Model United Nation teams to New York City for the National Model United Nations Conference, was a member of the cycling team, a Senator for the Associated Students of Montana, and volunteer debate coach. Before joining Montana Audubon for the session, Wyatt worked in radio as a production director, producer, and podcast coordinator; He also worked in Alaska as a commercial fishing scale operator. Wyatt found his love for the outdoors working on trout restoration projects, hunting, fishing, biking, skiing, and reading John Muir.

by Amy Seaman, Conservation Program Manager, Montana Audubon

Rally For Public Lands: 12 PM, January 11th, Capitol Rotunda, Helena

Rally with fellow Montanans in celebration of our outdoor way of life and to stop private interests from seizing and exploiting our public lands! Many of the special landscapes where we view wildlife, hike, hunt, fish and spend some of our most meaningful time in are public lands. These places are the foundation of Montana's \$7 billion outdoor economy, provide critical habitat for fish and wildlife and offer irreplaceable opportunities for solitude and recreation.

Montana Audubon is part of a statewide coalition to keep public lands in public hands! We're coor-

dinating rides to the rally from communities around the state. If you can attend, please let us know.

You can also add your voice to this effort to defend the future of our public lands by filling out the [Public Lands Pledge](#) found on our website.

Find out more by visiting the Montana Audubon web site at: <https://mtaudubon.org/>

by Amy Seaman, Conservation Program Manager, Montana Audubon



Thank You!

...to those below who have made donations to Flathead Audubon through November 2018.

Merlin

Dennis Hester
Paula & Bob Smith



merlinfalcon foundation

Kestrel

Carol Bibler
David Sowerwine
Richmond & Sarah Thomason
Becky Williams



rspb.org.uk

My Own Vision

Dee Manning

Supporting Member + Donation

Gael Bissell
John & Kris Bruninga
Carol Buchan
Bill & Sarah Dakin
Frank & Linda de Kort
Kathleen Sheehan Dugan
Lisa B. Flowers
Tony & Buffi Lloyd
Anne Lent & Charles McCarty
Mary Patterson
Bruce Tannehill
Darcy Thomas
Michell Tyler



granderie.ca

Donations to the year-end appeal will be listed at a later date.

Kalispell CBC Reminder

The 20th annual Kalispell count will be on **Sunday, December 30th**. This count has proven to be a popular New Year's tradition. This count is "young" enough that we still have much to discover. And yet it is "urban" enough to include the homes, bird feeders, and favorite birding spots of many of our members! Our traditional start to this count is a group breakfast at 7:00 AM; **this year we will meet at 4B's Restaurant (formerly Finnegan's) at 660 East Idaho St in Kalispell.** It is here that we will finish assigning circle segments and field teams for the day's efforts. If you are interested in participating, please contact Pete Fisher at fisherpete88@yahoo.com or 406-250-9624 to sign up or for more information.

SPECIAL GIFTS

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



- 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:

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Address _____

City _____

State _____ Zip _____

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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

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Be sure to check flatheadaudubon.org for

Late breaking FAS news and announcements
Online FAS membership sign up or renewal
Latest eBird reports on species being observed in the Flathead area



Clipartfest.com



Newsletter of the Flathead Audubon Society

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

January 2019



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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 PM and include a featured guest who presents a conservation or nature program. The Board of Directors meet the Monday preceding the general meeting, at 6 PM at Gateway Community Center, US Hwy 2 West, Kalispell. Both meetings are open to all.

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: lindawin626@gmail.com. Deadline for newsletter copy is the 18th of each month. Contact newsletter editor at 755-1406; email submissions to: lindawin626@gmail.com

Website: www.FlatheadAudubon.org

Conservation Educator - Denny Olson: auduboneducator@gmail.com

FLATHEAD AUDUBON SOCIETY DIRECTORY

OFFICERS

Table with 4 columns: Position, Name, Email, Phone. Includes President Kay Mitchell, Vice-President Gael Bissell, Secretary Marylane Pannell, and Treasurer Joe Batts.

DIRECTORS

Table with 4 columns: Year, Name, Email, Phone. Lists directors from 2016-2019 including Cory Davis, Rod Walette, Jan Metzmaker, Jake Bramante, Diane Boyd, Pam Willison, Bob Lopp, Carole Jorgenson, Gail Linne, Bob Lee, Kathy Ross, Mike Fanning, and Derrick Rathe.

COMMITTEE CHAIRS

Table with 4 columns: Committee, Name, Email, Phone. Lists chairs for Conservation, Education, Field Trips, Finance, Donations, Hospitality, and Membership.

Table with 4 columns: Committee, Name, Email, Phone. Lists chairs for Nominations, Natural Area, Newsletter, Program, Publicity, Sales, Refuges, and Website.

MONTANA AUDUBON

P.O. Box 595, Helena, MT 59624 443-3949 www.MTAudubon.org
Executive Director: Larry Berrin lberrin@mtaudubon.org
Board Member representing FAS, Bob Lee rml3@centurytel.net 270-0371
Bob Lopp, alternate boblopp@bresnan.net 250-7753

FLATHEAD AUDUBON SOCIETY Membership Individual or Family

- Basic Membership \$25 Pays for newsletter and operating costs
Supporting Membership \$40 Extra \$15 funds local projects such as Conservation Education and Owen Sowerwine Natural Area
Additional Donation of \$
To: Education Fund, Owen Sowerwine Fund, Wherever needed

Total \$

You may renew or join online on our website:

http://www.flatheadaudubon.org/

The Pileated Post is sent to FAS members by email. If you wish to receive a paper copy by USPS, check this box.

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