



the Flathead Post

Newsletter of the Flathead Audubon Society

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MAY, 2000

FLATHEAD AUDUBON AND MONTANA AUDUBON TO SIGN NEW LEASE ON THE OWEN SOWERWINE NATURAL AREA

Flathead Audubon and Montana Audubon will soon be signing a new lease on the Owen Sowerwine Natural Area (OSNA), a 442-acre riparian cottonwood habitat, ½ mile east of the Kalispell city limits. FAS and Montana Audubon are working closely together to finalize this lease agreement. The Natural Area is located between the Stillwater and Flathead Rivers a few hundred yards north of the Leisure Island boat landing.

Flathead Audubon Society (FAS) got involved in February of 1992 when it was learned that the County Park board wanted to dump the state lease because it went up from \$200 to \$550 per year.

First FAS paid the Park Board \$350 per year, then after several years of negotiations, Flathead Audubon took over the lease (Feb. of 1997). The thrust of FAS's efforts has always been to protect the riparian corridor; stabilize the lease fee; keep the area open to the public; and conduct education, research, and field trips...all without having each person that visits the OSNA required to purchase a State Lands Recreation Permit. Audubon leases this area for all people in Montana.

Janet Ellis, from Montana Audubon, has been the key negotiator in this lease and has had the help of the officers of FAS. Janet's proximity to and rapport with DNRC personnel has been a big "plus" in these efforts.

At the local level, we will be able to continue protecting this rich riparian habitat from development and continue our educational field trips and research. At the State level, OSNA joins other island areas in the braided river section being protected by Fish, Wildlife & Parks and has resulted in the DNRC considering the expansion of Montana's "Natural Areas Act" to include state

lands being leased by The Nature Conservancy at the Pine Butte Swamp Preserve.

Access to OSNA is gained at the east ends of Treasure Lane and Greenridge Drive. A legal access point is also available at the south end of Howard Drive, although it is an unmarked footpath along a section line running east and is tough to locate, at this time. Parking is currently confined to 1-2 vehicles, so a preferred method is to access the main island by canoe or boat. At this time of year we will experience "high water" at least until mid-June and this is a bona fide **hazard**: you can not see into the water to check bank location or obstructions and the current is strong enough to sweep away the most accomplished swimmer. Dan Casey leads a birding / canoeing trip to OSNA most years and participants have seen upwards of 65+ species on a single, half day trip.

Our chapter and Montana Audubon have worked hard to secure this lease. Be careful out there, enjoy the natural beauty, and be kind to the neighbors...they have been quite supportive of our efforts.

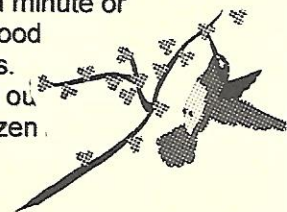
Brent Mitchell, Conservation Chair FAS

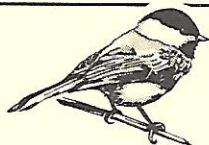
HUMMER TIPS AND BITS BY ELLY JONES

Soon the little ones will be arriving and we can hang our feeders out. The nectar formula is one part sugar to four parts water. Boil a minute or two to retard mold and please omit the food coloring as it may be harmful to the birds.

Until feeder activity picks up put out amounts of nectar. The extra can be frozen in small containers for later use.

(Continued on page 3)





CHICKADEE CHATTER

Green leaves, green grass, butterflies by the dozen, buttercups and yellow bells and newly arrived osprey trying to find fish in the now muddy water of the Flathead River. Warm rain and 12 inches of snow and cloudless sunny skies. The dance of skyward swallows and the beautiful song of the Varied Thrush filling the air with notes and water skippers defying gravity on top of the water. Yes spring is here.

On a mostly sunny day not long ago I took an afternoon off to celebrate spring. A friend and I drove just west of Kalispell to the Smith Lake Waterfowl Production Area to watch a few birds and enjoy a beautiful afternoon. The Smith Lake WPA is a wonderful place to go bird watching in the springtime. The first stop was the boat landing area. Tree swallows were performing their daring swoops and dives and a chattering Kingfisher flew overhead.

Once at the boat landing we got our spotting scope out, most of the ducks that are to be seen are out on the lake or near the other shore. Those little dots on the lake soon became an amazing array of ducks. The most abundant of the dots became hundreds of American Coots in several large rafts strung out across the lake. The coot is not a duck at all but a rail. There was a slight breeze blowing and there were a few fishermen on the dock but those noisy coots took first prize in the who can make the most noise category. Lots of coot conversation! In amongst all the coots were half a dozen American Widgeon.

An Osprey flew over the lake in search of a mid-afternoon snack, he circled and hovered and with no warning he folded his wings and dove headlong into the water, you could hear the slap of his wings as they hit the water. He missed. But he was hungry and soon returned for another thrilling dive into the water, this time he caught the fish and flew off to a snag on the opposite shore to eat. I have seen them do this a hundred times and I still hold my breath and am amazed by what I have witnessed.

Through the scope we could see mostly Redheads and Canvasback ducks, with a few Common Goldeneye and Bufflehead mixed in. There were a fair number of Ruddy Ducks in their striking red breeding plumage, stiff tail sticking up. Off on several distant snags were Double-crested Cormorants sunning themselves; a few were in the water, long necks sticking out.

There is a good size population of Red-necked Grebes at Smith Lake, as well. These

interesting birds were building floating nests and we watched them bring twigs to the nest, arrange the twig appropriately and leave to get more twigs and grasses. They were very busy. Along the shore of the lake a solitary Pied-billed Grebe was foraging for food. We also spotted a raft of American Avocets, these we had to look at several times because they were floating on the lake rather than walking along the shore. They float oddly almost like a wedge in the water, long bills sticking out in front.

Besides the Osprey, there are good many raptors to be found near the Lake. There were several immature Bald Eagles, both male and female Northern Harriers, Red-tailed Hawks flew over fields and beautiful little American Kestrels flashed rufous in the sun. At the end of the day and at the edge of the marsh at the end of the Lake a magnificent Turkey Vulture flew in slow spirals and a Sandhill Crane took flight from his hiding place in the cattails. As we drove back to Kalispell we listened to Western Meadowlarks sing their fluid, astonishing song and caught flashes of blue as both Western and Mountain Bluebirds crossed our path. It was a good day with sun and birds and the breath of wind in our hair. The count for a few short hours totaled 34 species of birds, turtles and frogs, ground squirrels, several different butterflies and all kinds of 'bugs', we found yellow bells and shooting stars blooming on the warm hillsides and a few buttercups still hanging on.

These special spring days are rare and few and I treasure each of them. I hope you, my readers, have some special days ahead of you this spring and summer. If you have a chance, go up and enjoy some bird watching at the Smith Lake Waterfowl Management Area. Have a wonderful spring and summer.

Leslie Kehoe



MAY MEETING

Monday, May 8, 2000

Lone Pine State Park Visitor's Center

Board Meeting at 4:00PM

Potluck Supper at 6:00PM

Program begins at 7:00PM

Bring a potluck dish and your own service.

Board and Officer elections will be held during the general meeting.

PROGRAM: Our very own Sharon and Colin DeLong will present a slide program on their 6 week canoe voyage up the Inside Passage of British Columbia. It was quite an adventure, please join us!



HUMMER TIPS AND BITS CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Change the nectar every few days, especially in warm weather. Hummers prefer shady feeder locations and under the eaves of the house works well. Clean feeders with hot water and a brush, sponge or pipe cleaner.

The male hummers start leaving in early July and the females follow later when the hatchlings become independent and these are the last to leave. Hummers must build up their fat reserves for migrations, an average weight for a hummer is about the same as a penny. When the weight increases to about twice that much, off they go. Feeders can be put out as long as hummers are passing through, it will help them on their way. I keep a bottle out into September. Hummers migrate singly and not tucked under a gosse's wing.

DNA studies continue on these tiny birds, it has been found that the Swan Valley birds are a different race from those in the Troy-Yaak area, who are more related to coastal hummingbirds. The Swan Valley birds migrate south along the mountains and the Troy-Yaak birds use a different route.

Humming along, Elly Jones

MARCH AND APRIL BOARD ACTIVITIES

The Board continues to explore new ways to raise funds for FAS educational and conservation projects. Response to the Education Committee's Challenge Donation has been disappointing, only \$90 collected so far. FAS will receive ¼ of the funds raised by the Bird Festival raffle and silent auction. Board members will make an extra effort to sell raffle tickets and generate items for the silent auction. The FAS officers will form a Birdathon team in a further effort to raise more money.

Plans for establishing a Nature/Interpretive Center at Lone Pine are progressing. Ferne Cohen has met several times with Dave Landstrom of Montana Fish Wildlife & Parks (MFWP), who is writing the budget request for upgrading Lone Pine. The MFWP plan calls for a library in the front area of the Interpretive Center. FAS has agreed to include its collection of nature books in that library, and private donations of books would be added.

Sonja Hartman, Chair of the Education Committee, announced that May 20 is the

deadline for applications for FAS Nature Scholarships. Availability of the scholarships will be publicized in the Big Brothers/Sisters newsletter, the Pileated Post, and local newspapers, and the local teachers who use Audubon Adventures will be notified.

Leslie Kehoe, Refuges Chair, is looking at ways that FAS can support the development of the new Lost Trail NWR. Leslie has worked with US Fish and Wildlife and MFWP to develop plans for a bird survey at the Refuge. Each of the groups (USF&W, MFWP and FAS) would provide a team to do point counts over the summer. The Board agreed to provide the FAS team.

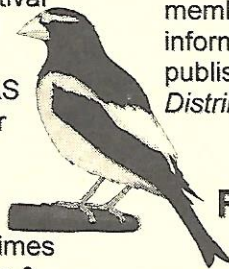
Brent Mitchell, Conservation Chair, reports that FRDO has received several requests for permits for fill or rip-rap projects on Flathead River. The Board is concerned that FRDO evaluation of these requests does not take appropriate account of the cumulative affects of such projects. Brent has forwarded to FRDO a request from FAS that no permits for these projects be given until an Environmental Assessment has been completed that includes a study of cumulative effects.

A high-school student seat on the FAS Board has been instituted. It will be shared by three FVHS students next year: Lauren Casey, K.C. McBroom and Seth Watkins.

The new Mission Mountain Audubon Society has now achieved provisional chapter status. Jim Rogers will head up that group. Leo Keane will serve as the FAS Past President next year.

Montana Audubon has taken over the gathering of data for *Montana Bird Distribution*, and has asked local Audubon chapters to gather data for the latilongs in their region. Three latilongs are in the FAS region: Libby, Kalispell-Whitefish, and Glacier Park. FAS will ask its members and field trip leaders to help provide information for these regions. The aim is to publish the sixth edition of *Montana Bird Distribution* in the fall of 2001.

By Linda Winnie

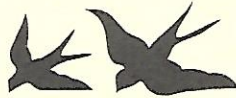


FLATHEAD BIRD FESTIVAL

The registration form for the very first Montana Bird Festival should have made it to your doorstep by now. Wonderful programs and field trips have been planned and bird lovers will be in bird heaven. Send in your registration form as soon as possible. If you did not receive a festival form you can call Montana Audubon at 406-443-3949 and request one. **(Continued on Page 5)**



FROM THE PRESIDENT



The greatest and simplest power of a teacher is the environment of their own freedom and joy." -- Jack Kornfield

Spring is here. Of course in this part of the country that means the arrival of our southern avian cousins, the first glacier lilies coming into bloom, and at least one last blizzard. It is the time of renewal.

As spring passes into summer be sure to renew yourself by taking the time to contemplate the wonder of life, ideally, share that wonder with a child. Once a month, Pattie and I visit a fourth grade class in Bigfork. We are known as Mr. and Mrs. Science. Over the years we have taught classes on light, astronomy, feathers (one of my favorites), Glacial Lake Missoula, insects, marine mammals, invertebrates, kinship, ducks, mammals, beetles, flight, and more.

Pattie and I usually pick a subject at least a week before our class then spend the next week researching it. We try to incorporate an experiment or an entertaining way of explaining the subject at hand. The kids are great and always have questions we cannot answer. There is nothing like an inquisitive child to remind us that we do not know it all, and at the same time, inspire us to continue learning. Curiosity is a wonderful garden to cultivate. Please take the time to share your knowledge of the natural world with our children.

Here are some spring things to do for yourself:

Look over the Flathead Audubon Field Trip schedule then join us as we explore our neighborhoods for those really hot birding spots (and amphibian spots and bat spots and wildflower spots).

Be sure to come to the Flathead Bird Festival. It takes place at Polson, June 2-4. It will be a great experience for birders of all levels of expertise.

If you would like to learn more about wetlands, a seminar is being organized for the 31st of May. We will learn what plant and soil types designate a wetland and what laws regulate wetlands. Our wetlands provide habitat for a wide range of life. In fact up to 90% of our wildlife use wetlands as their prime habitat at some part of their life cycle. Wetlands also provide critical flood control. If you would like more information on this seminar, give me a call @ 837-5018.

The bears are out of their dens. That means it is time to stop feeding your birds. Please do not be responsible for the loss of a Grizzly. Remember: A FED BEAR IS A DEAD BEAR.

If you will take note, on the back cover of your Pileated Post you will see listed the names of Flathead Audubon's Officers, Board of Directors and Committee Chairs. Flathead Audubon is honored to have active and committed Officers, Directors and Committee Chairs that give generously and creatively of their time and expertise. Please take time to recognize their efforts by telling them THANK YOU. In particular I would like to extend my appreciation of the efforts of Sharon DeLong and William Breen. Sharon and Bill are both leaving our Board of Directors after serving three year terms. They are both champions of the natural world and have consistently taken the high ground for the defense of wildlife habitat. Their input has been of the highest value. Thanks Sharon. Thanks Bill. I and the rest of the Officers and Board of Directors thank you for your leadership and dedication to Flathead Audubon.

Happy Nature Trails, **Neal Brown**

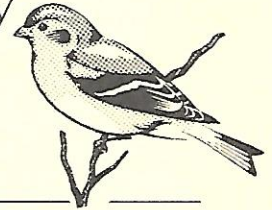


"We simply need that wild country available to us, even if we never do more than drive to its edge and look in. For it can be a means of reassuring ourselves of our sanity as creatures, a part of the geography of hope."

By Wallace Stegner from the Wilderness Letter



Flathead Audubon Society 2000 Summer Field Trips



The Public is Invited to All Trips

Standard equipment for ALL trips includes comfortable SHOES, BINOCULARS, SCOPES, FIELD GUIDES, FOUL WEATHER GEAR, and a SACK LUNCH or SNACK. Special requirements for some trips are noted below. When possible, car pooling for trips will be arranged at the meeting site.

Be sure to check the Flathead Audubon BIRD HOTLINE for updates (756-5595)

BIGFORK WILD MILE CORRIDOR WILDFLOWER and BIRD WALKS. Each Tuesday of May and June, 10 AM to Noon. May 2-9-16-23-30 June 6-13-20-27. Join Montana Native Plant Society members Anne Morley (botanist and botanical illustrator) and Neal Brown (Flathead Audubon Society) for a gentle morning of wildflower and bird identification. We will help you improve your identification skills through drawing and listening and habitat awareness. Each walk will be approximately two mild miles on established trails along the Swan River adjacent to Bigfork. Meet in front of Showthyme! restaurant in downtown Bigfork at 10 AM. These forays are sponsored by The Flathead Chapter of the Montana Native Plant Society, The Flathead Audubon Society and Wild birds Unlimited of Bigfork, as part of a community fund raising effort to establish a permanent green belt along the Wild Mile Corridor. A tax deductible donation of \$10.00 to the Bigfork Development Co. Wild Mile Corridor Fund is suggested.

FRIDAY MAY 5, THE BEST OF THE INTERNATIONAL WILDLIFE FILM FESTIVAL. at the Flathead High School at 7PM. Hosted by the Montana Wilderness Association. Films will be on the wildlife of Hokkaido, Penguins, the Dipper of Finland and others. Ticket will be sold at the door and are \$5 for adults and \$3 for children 12 and under.

SATURDAY MAY 13, HARLEQUIN DUCKS AND AMERICAN DIPPERS. See first hand the amazing adaptations of Harlequin Ducks, one of Montana's rarest birds. We will watch them courting in the rapids alongside the American Dipper, a hearty year-round resident. Easy, all morning trip with short level walks. Glacier National Park entrance fee or pass required. The number of participants will be limited to minimize disturbance to these shy ducks. Please call John Ashley to register and arrange a meeting time and place at 892-3825.

SATURDAY, MAY 13, INTERNATIONAL MIGRATORY BIRD DAY AT THE NATIONAL BISON RANGE. The Red Sleep Mountain long drive is scheduled to open on this date. There are several birding walks and talks planned, as well as interactive displays. The walks are by appointment and will be lead by Bison Range staff, please call ahead to register. The Bison Range is a fee area, cost per vehicle is \$4, Golden Eagle Passports and Duck Stamps are also accepted. You may call Ms. Pat Jamieson at the National Bison Range for more information and to register for the walks at 406-644-2211, ext. 207.

SUNDAY MAY 21, FLATHEAD AUDUBON INTERNATIONAL MIGRATORY BIRD DAY WARBLER. **WALK.** Flathead Audubon will celebrate International Migratory Bird Day with a walk in the woods to find and identify some of the neotropical migrants that fly here to Montana; warblers, thrushes, vireos, and tanagers, just to name a few. This will be a guided birding trip into the Swan Lake National Wildlife Refuge. It is great opportunity for novices to learn from local warbler enthusiasts and for experienced birders to brush up on their warblers. Song identification will be emphasized. Meet at the Swan Lake Campground (north of Swan Lake Townsite) at 8:30AM. Please call Leo Keane for more information at 862-5807.

SATURDAY MAY 20, SPRING LOON DAY. Help area biologists get a better handle on numbers of nesting and non-nesting loons during this pre-cursor to the "Montana Loon Day" (which is for counting chicks in July). Call the following contacts if you can help search area lakes: Flathead basin, Jane Engebretson 837-5081; Flathead Indian Reservation, Brett Gullett 675-2700; Whitefish area, Norm Mertz 751-2259; Murphy Lake area, Christie Ferruzzi 882-4451.

SATURDAY AND SUNDAY May 20 & 21, GLACIER INSTITUTE WORK WEEKEND. At the field camp, volunteers will build a kiosk, stairs, shelves, and transform the intern cabin into a museum & library. RSVP required. Call the Institute at 755-1211.





SATURDAY MAY 27, LOST TRAIL WILDLIFE REFUGE TRIP. Join us for a trip to the new National Wildlife Refuge in the Pleasant Valley near Marion. We have a chance to see all kinds of birds as the habitat there is very diverse from shore birds to ducks to warblers to raptors. We will meet at 8AM at the Fish, Wildlife & Parks Building in Kalispell. Please call Leslie Kehoe at 837-4467.

FRIDAY TO SUNDAY JUNE 2-4, MONTANA BIRD FESTIVAL IN POLSON, DON'T FORGET. Need information call Montana Audubon at 406-443-3949.



SUNDAY JUNE 18, OWEN SOWERWINE CANOE TRIP. Leaders: Susannah and Dan Casey (857-3143) Join Susannah & Dan for a half-day exploration of an island park in the Flathead River near Kalispell. Canoe to the island (easy flat-water paddling) and bushwhack through the Owen Sowerwine Natural Area. Features breeding birds and a close-up look at the diversity of endangered cottonwood communities. Bring canoe and life jackets (one for each person). Meet at 7:30 a.m. in Rosauer's parking lot in Kalispell. A shuttle back to vehicles will be provided.

SATURDAY JUNE 24, DANNY ON TRAIL BIRD-WATCHING HIKE. We are planning a 2-3 hour hike UP the mountain and ride the chair lift back down. Participants need to be in good hiking condition. It will be a good chance to learn some of the forest bird songs, including Swainson's Thrush, Hermit Thrush, Yellow-rumped Warbler and MacGillivray's Warbler. Please call Bruce & Gail Tannehill at 862-4548 for meeting time and place.

SATURDAY JULY 1 OWEN SOWERWINE BIRD WANDER. Dwight Bergeron from MT Fish, Wildlife & Parks call 752-5501. Join us for a 2-3 hour exploration in the Owen Sowerwine Natural Area. We will be able to see lots of riparian birds including Warbling Vireos, Yellow and Yellow-rumped Warblers, Red-naped Sapsuckers and Wood Ducks to name a few. Meet at 8:30AM at the west end of the Kmart parking lot. We will carpool to the Natural Area. Wear long pants and shoes you can get wet.

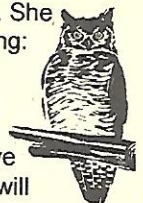
SATURDAY JULY 8, SQUIRMY, SCALY CRITTER SEARCH. This is a special invitation for children to join biologists from the Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks and the US Forest Service on a search for salamanders, snakes, frogs, turtles, and other fun critters! Bring your favorite youngster of any age, and rubber boots. Meet at the Kalispell office of Fish, Wildlife & Parks at 9 a.m. Dan Casey will lead this search for creatures you can reach him at 857-3143 for more information.

SATURDAY JULY 15, MONTANA LOON DAY. Help area biologists determine how many new millennium loon chicks were successfully produced this summer in Montana. Call the following contacts if you can help search area lakes: Flathead basin, Jane Engebretson 837-5081; Flathead Indian Reservation, Brett Gullett 675-2700; Whitefish area, Norm Mertz 751-2259; Murphy Lake area, Christie Ferruzzi 882-4451.

SATURDAY JULY 22, BAT BIOLOGY & CAPTURE. Join bat expert Dr. Amy Kuenzi for an up-close-and-personal evening with bats at Neal & Pattie Brown's house. A discussion on bat biology will be followed by 2-3 hours of mist-netting to catch bats after dusk. Dr. Kuenzi will bring new equipment that displays echolocations on a computer screen as they occur. Plan to be out until midnight. Wear warm clothes that can get dirty, and bring bug repellent and a headlamp. Please call Neal & Pattie Brown for directions and sign up at 837-5018. 20 person limit.

SUNDAY JULY 23, FLATHEAD RIVER FLOAT. Leaders: Susannah & Dan Casey (857-3143) Canoe from Presentine Bar Fishing Access to Leisure Island in Kalispell. This beginner level float is an easy 6 hours on the river (no whitewater) through a variety of riparian habitats. Bring canoe, lifejackets (one for each person), lunch, and raingear. Meet at 9 a.m. at the Kalispell K-Mart parking lot.

SATURDAY AUGUST 5, PURPLE LOOSESTRIPE PULL AT NINEPIPE REFUGE. Join our Eleventh Annual Celebration of the aquatic ecosystems of the Ninepipe pothole wetland complex. Hosted by: Flathead Audubon Society, Mission Mountain Audubon Society and the Flathead Chapter of the Montana Native Plant Society 8:00 A.M.- Meet at Ninepipe Lodge for a birding exploration of Ninepipe. (Ninepipe Lodge is located six miles south of Ronan on U.S. Highway 93) 10:00 A.M.- Regroup at Ninepipe Lodge for our annual Purple Loosestrife Pull. You may join at 8AM or 10AM. Gourmet desserts at lunch will be provided by Pattie. Total time 4 hours. This year we will be joined by Allison Rowland of the National Bison Range. Allison will bring us up to date on current efforts to control Purple Loosestrife. She will also give a presentation on the efforts to control Dalmatian toadflax on the Bison Range grasslands. What to bring: Binoculars and /or spotting scope, gloves, shoes to get wet (this is a wetlands field trip- work party after all!), water, LUNCH. Led by Neal and Pattie Brown contact them 837-5018.



SUNDAY AUGUST 13, MIGRANT SHOREBIRDS. This trip will highlight the shorebirds of the Valley, it will give you a chance to see dowagers, phalaropes, yellowlegs and sandpipers, up to 15 species may be seen. Dan Casey will lead this trip to various spots around the Valley, where ever the birds are to be found. Meet at the west end of the Tidyman's parking lot at 9AM. Please RSVP to Dan at 857-3143.



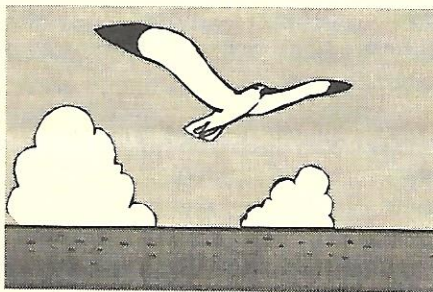
FLATHEAD BIRD FESTIVAL CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3

You can help raise funds for local Audubon projects by donating an item for the Silent Auction to be held at the Flathead Bird Festival (June 2-4). Proceeds from this Auction will be shared by Flathead Audubon, Mission Mountain Audubon and Montana Audubon.

Auction items will be collected at the Flathead Audubon May Potluck. Please include a note with the name and address of the donor, and the estimated value of the item.

Donations for the Silent Auction can also be sent anytime before June 2 to the Montana Audubon office in Helena, or to Jim Rogers in Polson.

Come join Flathead Audubon, Mission Mountain Audubon, Montana Audubon and a cast of thousands, bird watchers and birds, at the Flathead Bird Festival in Polson for three days of celebration. It will be an event not soon forgotten.



FLATHEAD AUDUBON NATURE EDUCATION SCHOLARSHIPS AVAILABLE

Have you ever wanted to participate in a class or educational program, but not had the finances to do so? Flathead Audubon would like to help. Partial scholarships are available for youth and adults to attend educational programs that focus on natural history, environmental science or conservation issues. To apply you must be a resident of Northwest Montana, and need financial help to make this type of experience happen. You do not need to be a member of Flathead Audubon, but preference may be given to Audubon members. To apply, please call Sonja Hartmann at 387-9058 and request an application. The deadline for applications is May 20. Please call Sonja if you have any questions.

FLATHEAD AUDUBON SOCIETY ELECTIONS IN MAY

The terms of several FAS officers and board members end this May. The FAS membership will vote on who shall fill these vacancies at the upcoming FAS potluck meeting. The Nominating Committee will offer the following slate for this election:

Secretary	Gail Sullivan
Treasurer	Bruce Tannehill
Board of Directors	John Ashley
	Sonja Hartmann
	Robin Magaddino
	Jay Shepherd

Nominations will also be taken at the meeting for any of these positions.

Several appointed positions will also become vacant in May. Volunteers to serve in two of these positions have already stepped forward:

Christmas Bird Counts	Dan Casey
Assistant Newsletter Editor	Meg Hahr

Flathead Audubon is still seeking volunteers to take on the following appointed positions:

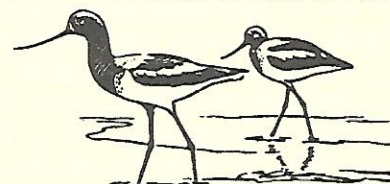
Refreshments -- Organize the refreshment table at each meeting and obtain volunteers to bring refreshments.

Meeting Sales and Raffle -- Conduct a raffle of donated items at each meeting, and supervise the sale table.

Publicity -- Write and distribute press releases and public service announcements about FAS meetings and other special events to local radio stations and newspapers. Most of this can be done by email or computer fax.

Quality of Life -- Organize projects and activities that promote a conservation life-style. A major project in the past has been the Flathead Valley Precycling Program.

If you are interested in helping in any of these areas, please call Linda de Kort at 755-3704.





BEWARE OF BEARS

Bears and bird-feeding just don't mix well and the Board of Directors of FAS would like to remind you to take your feeders down from May 1 until November 1. Black bears and grizzly bears are always looking for easy food, and they are very good at finding it. A good rule of thumb is if we or our animals eat it, bears will eat it too.

Birds don't need the food in the summer and bears love it. So take down your feeders for the summer months if you live in bear country. Clean up the area around the feeders. Once fed a bear will return time after time and year after year, bears remember where they have found food. Remember it is far easier to prevent problems from starting than to change a bear's behavior afterward. If you have questions you can call Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks at 752-5501. Please help protect our bears, remember a fed bear is a dead bear...it bears repeating.

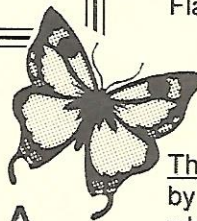
Excerpts from MT FWP pamphlet on Bear Attractants: Why is this Bear in my Yard? and is available at MT FWP.

THE FLATHEAD AUDUBON WEB SITE WILL
HAVE ALL THE SPRING AND SUMMER FIELD
TRIPS LISTED AND OTHER BIRD INFORMATION
CHECK IT OUT!

www.audubon.org/chapter/mt/flathead

LOST TRAIL NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE AND FLATHEAD AUDUBON NEED A FEW GOOD BIRD WATCHERS

Lost Trail National Wildlife Refuge is the newest addition to the National Refuge system, it is number 519. It is located in the Pleasant Valley about 40 road miles west of Kalispell and is administered by the National Bison Range with a manager on the site. Once a working ranch, the Refuge now contains over 9300 acres of wetland, riparian and upland habitat. There is a 160 acre shallow lake called Dahl Lake and Pleasant Valley Creek runs through the Refuge. The Refuge displays an exceptional diversity of wetlands and uplands and amazing biodiversity. White-tailed deer, elk, bear, mountain lions and moose have all been seen not to mention wolves.



The bird diversity is remarkable as well, Sandhill cranes, Black Terns, Bitterns, all kinds of ducks including Cinnamon and Blue-winged Teal, Ruddy Ducks, Wood Ducks and American Widgeon all breed on the Refuge. Shore birds and marsh birds and migratory song-birds are all found here. There is a breeding pair of Bald Eagles and many kinds of raptors. It is a fantastic place to go bird-watching.

The Refuge, however, is brand new and all kinds of things need to be accomplished. Flathead Audubon would like to lend a hand by helping conduct a bird survey. We would like to get up the Refuge three times or so this summer and basically watch birds. It will be an enjoyable excursion and all volunteers have to do is: get up early, enjoy each others company, walk here and there and watch birds. Ultimately, FAS would like to create a Bird List for the Refuge. If you would like to help with the survey please call Leslie Kehoe, Refuge Projects Chair at 837-4467.

This is a wonderful opportunity to become involved with a brand new National Wildlife Refuge, to see the changes that will take place over the years as the Lost Trail Ranch is transformed into Lost Trail National Wildlife Refuge whose goal is habitat protection and enhancement.

The Pleasant Valley is a beautiful place and the new Lost Trail NWR is a very special place with wonderful biodiversity. Take a few hours this summer and go to the Refuge and if you have a few hours to go bird-watching with Flathead Audubon please call and volunteer.

Leslie Kehoe, Refuge Projects Chair

THE DUCK STAMP STORY

The Duck Stamp Story: Art·Conservation·History, by Eric Jay Dolin Ph.D. and Bob Dumaine which has just been published in March 2000 (Krause Publications), is the most comprehensive, exciting, beautifully illustrated, up-to-date book ever written on the Federal Duck Stamp Program (please visit www.duckstampstory.com for information on the book, reviews, images, and ordering information). The Duck Stamp Program is one of the most successful conservation efforts in the world. Since 1934, sales of federal duck stamps have netted over five hundred million dollars, which has enabled the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to purchase over five million acres of National Wildlife Refuge land. Those acres, in turn, provide critical habitat for all variety of bird species, not just migratory waterfowl. A portion of the proceeds from the book will be given to the USFWS to acquire additional habitat in our nation's refuge system.



LET'S CELEBRATE WASTE MANAGEMENT 2000

Waste Management in Flathead County today reflects the state of the art. We are being well served in the management of our landfill facilities, the collection of our waste, and in education of the public. We can be proud of the administration of our Flathead County Solid Waste District Board and its Executive Director. The interaction and co-operation with community organizations is to be commended. Waste disposal opportunities have proliferated. We now have many sites for disposal of a variety of waste items, and for the collection of recyclables. We have safe hazardous waste disposal at the landfill. Composting is occurring at the landfill, in private homes. And communities.

In 1990, around Earth Day, Audubon members and many other organizations and individuals in the Flathead were concerned about hazardous waste disposal, ground water contamination at the landfill, and recovery of resources through recycling. These and other concerns were discussed with the landfill board, but the private haulers of waste in our cities were the first to respond by providing bins for the collection of recyclable items at cooperative grocery store sites. Eventually the Solid Waste District provided recycling opportunities at some of their green box sites in rural areas and at the landfill for newspapers, cardboard, aluminium, tin and plastic milk and soda bottles. Today the landfill is realizing net gain for these recyclables. The City of Whitefish now provides sites for recycling, which are served by a private hauler at city expense.

Resource recovery at the landfill includes junk vehicles, tires, oil and batteries as well as appliance recycling. The Hazardous Waste Disposal program requires an appointment: call 758-5910 for scheduling. One does not need to leave their car to unload at the drive-up location, where specially trained staff handles the poisons. Over 3700 gallons of toxic chemicals, corrosives, and oil-based paints were collected in 1999!

Just this April 24,800 pounds of newspapers, plus other recyclables have been donated to the Kalispell Tree Program: "FROM TREES TO PAPER TO TREES". There has been a growing community/county-wide response to this program.

Over 12 tons of compost has been collected, processed and used to cover garbage at the landfill. Encouragement of home

composting is being accomplished with Citizens for a Better Flathead and Flathead Valley Community College.

The water runoff problems at the landfill have been solved to eliminate ground water seepage and contamination of the aquifer. This problem was a challenge to engineers, and the solution is a commendable achievement.

We have much to be thankful for in the waste management of our landfill. We commend the enlightened leadership of the Flathead Solid Waste District Board and their knowledgeable Executive Director. We recognize the private haulers and the collectors of recyclables when there was little recognition or reimbursement for their efforts. We respect the community leaders, who persisted in questioning and demanding that the community be served with professional waste management. The cooperation of all of these entities educated the community and developed awareness of recycling and waste disposal issues.

We can each think before we buy to reduce waste and save money. The single new habit we can acquire is the use/reuse of grocery bags: canvas, string, plastic or paper for which we may even be reimbursed when we shop.

Source: 1999 REPORT OF THE FLATHEAD COUNTY SOLID WASTE DISTRICT

Article By Ferne Cohen, Quality of Life Chair

NEW OFFICE FOR DAN CASEY

Dan Casey, Flathead Audubon's former board member and long-time field trip leader has left Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks for The American Bird Conservancy and will be moving into a new office in Kalispell. He will be located on the second floor of the Montana Building, 33 Second Street East, in downtown Kalispell. Dan is looking for donations of office furniture and equipment to help out in the move. All tax-deductible donations will free up more of his operating budget for conservation efforts.

The following items are needed: Conference table and chairs, bookshelves, credenza, filing cabinets, telephone, small table/stand for coffee pot, drip coffee pot, floor lamps, wall lamps, coffee table, one or two upholstered chairs for guests.

Anyone who might have some items should contact Dan at 751-4581 days or 857-3143 evenings. The addition of another non-profit organization to the valley should pave the way for successful partnerships. Your consideration is really appreciated.

Dan Casey





FLATHEAD AUDUBON SOCIETY DIRECTORY

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Jim Rogers, P.O. Box 984, Polson, MT 59860

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Dorothy Poulsen, P.O. Box 595, Helena MT 59624

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BIRDING HOTLINE: 756-5595

The Flathead Audubon Society is affiliated with the National Audubon Society and meets on the second Monday of each month from September through May. The regular meeting starts at 7:30 p.m. and includes a featured guest who will present a conservation or nature program. The regular monthly meeting is preceded by the Executive Board meeting. Both meetings are open to all those interested.

THE PILEATED POST is published September through May and is sent to members of the Flathead Audubon Society as a membership benefit. Subscriptions for non-members are \$10.00 per year.

Deadline for newsletter copy: the 20th of each month. Newsletter e-mail ljkehoe@digisys.net

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Send this application and your check to:

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For Newsletter Only Send \$10 ☐

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