



# the Pileated Post

Newsletter of the Flathead Audubon Society

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JANUARY, 2002

## ELNA DARROW RECEIVES FAS RECOGNITION

We are extremely fortunate to have here in the Flathead a number of dedicated people who have made extraordinary contributions to the conservation of the natural values of our valley.

All of us who live in the Flathead are the beneficiaries of the hard work and commitment of such people. Equally important are the benefits of these conservation achievements to our birds and wildlife, and to bird and wildlife habitat.

At our December 2001 meeting, Flathead Audubon started on a new tradition. Several times each year we will formally recognize one of these individuals for their outstanding conservation achievements, and thank them for the contributions they have made.

Our first Recognition of Outstanding Conservation Achievements was presented at that meeting to Elna Darrow for her contributions to the protection and improvement of one of the most important resources we have in this valley – the quality of our water.

The presentation was made by Brent Mitchell, Chair of Flathead Audubon's Conservation Committee. Below is the text of that presentation:



Welcome Elna Darrow!

Flathead Audubon is privileged tonight to recognize your leadership, expertise and your emphasis on clean water in the Flathead Valley.

While we value your significant contributions to the Bigfork community for which you received the "Big Hat" award in 2000 from the Bigfork Development Company, tonight we pay special tribute to your efforts since your graduation from North Dakota State University, where you obtained your B.A in 1964 and your M.A. in 1956 with honors in economics. You then worked for the State of Montana and the private sector in the field of resource economics. From

1988 for ten years you served on the Board of Directors of the Flathead Lakers.

These experiences led to your appointment to the Flathead Basin Commission in 1989 by Governor Stan Stevens. You were appointed to two additional terms by Governor Mark Racicot. You served one term as vice chair, and two terms as chair. During this period your leadership was decisive in:

- Strengthening the Flathead Basin Commission's monitoring programs, including establishing three citizen volunteer water quality monitor programs.

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### FAS CALENDAR OF EVENTS FOR JANUARY 2002

**Monday, January 14** The Flathead Audubon Society General Meeting will feature a slide presentation by Karen Holzer entitled Measuring the Glaciers of Glacier National Park. Please join us! The meeting begins at the Fish, Wildlife & Parks Building 490 Meridian Rd. in Kalispell at 7:30PM. The Board of Directors meeting will take place at 5:30PM prior to the general meeting. Everyone is welcome to attend.

**Saturday, January 26 Join FAS for a Field Trip to the Lake McDonald Ranger Station. Please note the date change.** Birdwatching and ski trip from Lake McDonald Lodge to the Ranger Station at the head of Lake McDonald. Lunch at the Ranger Station. Distance is about 8 miles round trip. Meet at Lake McDonald upper parking lot at 10AM. Please call Jim or Sue at 387-4299 for more information.

**Sunday, February 17 Field Trip to the Mission Valley.** Please find information on page 3.



## CHICKADEE CHATTER

Happy New Year! I hope the new year will be one of peace and happiness. It is a generic wish, but very heartfelt. The world has been in such turmoil and it has affected everyone and reached into every corner, even we have not been immune in our beautiful valley.

After days of clouds and fog I watched a nearly full moon rise over the mountains in a nearly cloudless sky on New Years Eve. It was a magnificent sight. The moonlight so bright that moon shadows were cast here and there and the peaks in the distance shone white. Brilliant tiny stars sparkled in the depths of the night sky and the river of light that is the Milky Way could be seen. It was chilly standing there in the yard by my house; my breath made little puffs of fog in the still air. The snow on the ground around me glistened in the moonlight; little sparkles on the ground just a bright as the stars in the sky. It was a good night for reflection. It is always difficult to believe that another year has passed. The Earth starts a new journey around the Sun and we look forward to a new year full of hope and inspiration.

I had some wonderful experiences last year and I have shared many of them with you. I would like to share some stories of my last adventure with you as well. I had the great good fortune to travel to a very special place in November. I have wanted to go there most of my life. The islands of New Zealand were my destination. It is a truly unique and special place, very much like Montana and yet very exotic. New plants, new animals and best of all new birds and hundreds of miles of hiking tracks (trails) all waiting to be discovered.

New Zealand is only 103,736 square miles in area if you include the North Island, the South Island, Stewart Island (a small unique volcanic island off the southern tip of the South Island) and the Chatham Islands (a group of islands about 500 miles east of NZ). Montana is larger than the entire country at 145,338 square miles. It the diversity of the country that makes it remarkable. There are 3500 miles of coastline that include windy rocky headlands that jut out into the Pacific Ocean and deep mysterious fiords that flow into the Tasman Sea and remarkably beautiful sandy beaches. There are lovely peaceful bays and rocky coastlines where the ocean waves constantly break. The country has steep mountains that rise to a lofty 12,315 (Mt. Cook) and some 360 glaciers can be found on the mountain peaks. There is dense enigmatic rainforest filled with unusual birds and plants and broad plains filled with sheep, cows and red deer (mostly sheep). There are deep, turquoise blue glacial lakes and large, swift rivers filled with fish.

The flora and fauna of NZ is very unique. It is an island country many miles from any other land masses. The plants and animals that are here had to come millions of years ago when NZ was connected to the ancient continent of Gondwana or they had to travel on the winds or the waves. Many species of birds evolved in NZ and are found no where else on Earth.



No native mammals are to be found except for two unusual bat species. There are reptiles but no snakes. There are lots of insects and many of them think that humans are yummy.

If one looks on a world map you will find New Zealand some 1000 miles off of the east coast of Australia. It is located in temperate latitudes about half way between the equator and Antarctica. The Tasman Sea washes up on its western shores and the vast Pacific Ocean sweeps away to the east.

It is a very long way to this land down under. A 12-hour flight from Los Angeles will take you to Auckland the largest city in New Zealand. It is on the North Island and the plane lands at 5:30AM. It was late spring there and the sun was up and shining. After going through a very thorough customs examination I walked out of the door and I was there. (A note about customs: NZ is very careful about what comes into their country, they are mostly concerned about non-native plants and diseases that could affect agriculture. It was an impressive inspection.)

The trees and plants that greeted me as I walked out of the door were sufficiently exotic looking. I had never seen anything quite like the broad-leaved trees with flowers that looked like brilliant red spiky balls all over the tree (called a Rata) and filled with bird song. The first bird that I actually saw was, believe it or not, a European Starling. What a way to start the trip. On a positive note the second bird I saw was New Zealand's only swallow, aptly named the Welcome Swallow. My time in Auckland was very limited and I soon got on a plane that would take me to the South Island and Christchurch (the largest city on the S. Island with about 115,000 people).

My first adventure in NZ was to learn how to drive on the 'wrong' side of the road. It went pretty well that first day and got easier as the days went by. The rental car was returned unharmed, no dents or scratches. The Avon-Heathcote estuary in Christchurch is a great place to watch some birds and that was my first destination. I spent a number of rainy hours there watching sea birds and ducks and as the tide went out the shore birds that wandered in. It was a good introduction to some of New Zealand's unusual birds. There were three species of cormorants, which are called shag in NZ. The body shape is very similar to our Double-crested Cormorant, the sizes and plumage differ somewhat. Purple swamp-hens or Pukeko can be seen in the fields near the estuary, they are funny looking purple birds with bright red beaks. Here, too, are introduced birds such Mallards and Canadian Geese. Native ducks like the beautiful Paradise Shelduck are swimming and nesting here. There are baby ducks wandering around everywhere. It was very nice to see baby ducks in November. A flock of Bar-tailed Godwits were mucking around the tidal flat. These birds migrate here from Russia and Alaska where they breed. They fly approximately 7000 miles each September to NZ and return north in March. It is an amazing avian feat.

I will continue my tales of New Zealand next month and until then I wish you peace and happiness in the New Year of 2002.

Leslie Kehoe



## 5<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL GREAT BACKYARD BIRD COUNT

Bird lovers unite! No matter where you are in North America from February 15 to 18, you can participate in the Fifth Annual Great Backyard Bird Count (GBBC). Bird populations are in a continual state of flux, and this annual event serves as a snapshot, documenting where different species are during a four-day period. The results help ornithologists spot trends and identify species that may be in trouble. "By tracking changes in bird distribution and abundance over time, such a vast database can serve as the SOS for species that may be in trouble," says John Fitzpatrick, director of the Cornell Lab of Ornithology, which hosts the event with the National Audubon Society.

Everyone's contribution is important. It doesn't matter whether you identify, count, and report the 5 species coming to your backyard feeder or the 75 species you see during a day's outing to a wildlife refuge. Your data can help us answer many questions:

- How will this winter's snow and cold temperatures influence bird populations?
- Where are the WINTER finches and other irruptive species?
- Will late winter movements of many SONGBIRD and waterfowl species be as far north as they were last year?

The GBBC depends on "citizen science" for its success. Participants observe and tally the numbers and species of birds visiting their bird feeders, schoolyards, and parks. Counts are submitted over the Internet by clicking on the GBBC icon at BirdSource, an interactive web site devoted to gathering information from birdwatchers ([www.birdsource.org](http://www.birdsource.org)). The site is packed with helpful information for beginners and experts alike, including full-color pictures of birds, identification tips, recordings of bird calls, and distribution maps. There are also GBBC links on the Audubon web site at [www.audubon.org](http://www.audubon.org)

Backyard Bird Count data are combined with those from the annual Christmas Bird Count to provide an immense picture of winter birds and to gain insight into their population dynamics.

There's no fee or registration required to participate in the Great Backyard Bird Count. Those who do not have Internet access can contact the Flathead Valley Public Library or any officer of the Flathead Audubon Society (see the back of the newsletter). The data that you collect will be combined with Christmas Bird Count and Project FeederWatch data to give us an immense picture of our winter birds. Each year that these data are collected makes them more important and meaningful. So as we see patterns, discover new questions and insights, we'll update you.

So mark your calendar, dust off your binoculars, and happy counting. By Sydney Horton, National Audubon Society, Audubon in Action and The Cornell Lab of Ornithology

## FIELD TRIP TO THE MISSION VALLEY: IN SEARCH OF HAWKS AND OTHER INTERESTING WINTER BIRDS

Flathead Audubon is planning a birdwatching trip to the Mission Valley on Sunday, February 17, 2002. We will be roaming the backroads in search of the raptors that frequent the valley in the midst of winter. We should see lots of Rough-legged and Red-tailed Hawks, maybe a Prairie Falcon, some American Kestrels, Bald Eagles and possibly a Golden Eagle or two. We might even come across a cold Meadowlark or a flock of snow buntings and some other frosty songbirds. It should be a good time for birdwatching and we hope you can join us. We will meet at 8:00AM at the new parking area across from the White Oak Lodge (formerly the Ramada Inn) on Highway 93 and 82 (the Somers cut across road). If you would like to attend the trip please call Leslie Kehoe at 837-4467.



## JANUARY PROGRAM: MEASURING THE GLACIERS OF GLACIER NATIONAL PARK

A slide presentation by Karen Holzer, Physical Scientist with the Global Change Research Program (a division of the USGS Northern Rocky Mountain Science Center in Glacier Park).

How long will glaciers exist in Glacier National Park? One study has predicted that they will disappear by the year 2030. Recent work by the Global Change Research Program provides an even more reliable answer to this question.

The U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) has been keeping watch on the motions of these glaciers since early park history. Karen will review the history of these studies and talk about the results of the latest research and the techniques used to obtain them.

As part of their most recent studies, Karen and the USGS group dug out old photos of the glaciers in the Park (going back to 1890), then took new photos of the same places for comparison. Karen's slide presentation will include some of these "then and now" views. She will also talk about how satellite imagery and ground penetrating radar have also been used by the group to collect some very specific data on some of the glaciers.



## FROM THE PRESIDENT LINDA WINNIE



For many of us, the first part of January is a time to look back over the events that have brought us to where we are, and to make plans for the future.

The same holds true for an organization like Flathead Audubon. Our big job in the coming year will be to complete a new management plan for the Owen Sowerwine Natural Area (OSNA), and then to begin taking the first steps towards carrying out that plan. So I thought I would take this opportunity to recount some of the history of how we got to this point with OSNA, and tell you about some of the activities we hope to initiate at OSNA in the coming year.

It was the passage of Montana's Natural Areas Act in 1974 that opened the way for the creation of OSNA. That act was shepherded through the legislative process by Senator Dorothy Bradley, head of the Governor's Natural Areas Committee, and Ted Schwinden, who was at that time the Chair of the State Land Board.

The first proposal of a natural area site under the new Act came from the recently formed Flathead County Park Board. The Park Board nominated a 442-acre tract of state forest land that encompassed a large island ("the Big Island") in the braided section of the Flathead River, at the confluence of the Flathead and Stillwater Rivers, and portions of near-by islands and mainland shore pieces. Flathead County would pay the state lease fee on the tract, and the County Park Board would be responsible for managing the tract as a natural area. The Chair of the new Park Board, and one of the most energetic proponents of this project, was Owen Sowerwine. Sowerwine had also been a member of the State Land Board. He was well known in the Flathead at this time as an avid outdoorsman, and a dedicated conservationist.

Roughly 25 years ago, this 442-acre tract became Montana's first natural area. In April 1976, the State Land Board issued its recommendation that the tract be designated a natural area. The Land Board recommended that it be named after Owen Sowerwine, who had died a little over a year before, in January 1975. A public hearing on the proposed designation was held in May 1976 in the Community Room of the Conrad National Bank in Kalispell. The public was enthusiastic and the designation process moved forward. In due course the Owen Sowerwine Natural Area was established.

The official dedication ceremony took place September 9, 1978. An article in The Daily Inter Lake the following day begins: "It became official Saturday. A wild thicket enfolded in the coils of the Flathead and Stillwater Rivers is now protected under the name of Owen Sowerwine, the longtime Flathead Valley resident and conservationist who initiated the fight to preserve the area."

Participants in the ceremony that Saturday gathered in the morning at the Outlaw Inn, and were taken in a bus donated by the Inn to a boat launch site on the Stillwater. Volunteers from the Flathead County Search and Rescue then ferried the participants to the Big Island in boats provided by Montana Fish and Game. The dedication ceremony was attended by members of Sowerwine's family, then Lt. Governor Ted Schwinden, the members of the Flathead County Park Board, (then chaired by Arnold Jacobsen of Whitefish), and a number of other county and state officials.

The site was managed as a natural area by the Flathead County Park Board through 1995. In 1994 the yearly state lease fee had risen from the original \$200 to \$550, and Flathead County decided it could no longer afford to retain the lease. In 1996 Flathead Audubon stepped forward to assume the lease and manage the Area in order to maintain its status as a natural area.

When a new assessment in 1999 threatened an astronomical rise in the lease fee, Flathead Audubon joined with Montana Audubon to negotiate a long-term license for OSNA with a reasonable fee. Agreement was finally reached in the spring of 2001. Montana Audubon has become the official license holder, while Flathead Audubon pays the bulk of the yearly fee and carries out the management of the Area.

The original management plan for Owen Sowerwine was written in the late 1970s by the Flathead County Park Board. The forward to that plan, written by Sam Bibler, calls on the managers of OSNA "... to keep the heavy hand of man as much out of the management as possible, and to proceed as carefully and thoughtfully as possible."

With the signing of our new 10-year license came the task of writing a new management plan for OSNA. Montana Audubon and Flathead Audubon have been working together on a preliminary version. We are producing a document that is basically an updated version of the original management plan, still cast in the mold set by it needs to be moved through an approval process. As part of that process, the plan will be made available for public comment. At that time the Pileated Post will carry information on the details of the plan, and copies will be made available to all Flathead Audubon members.

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## FROM THE PRESIDENT CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4

This coming spring, we hope to launch several new projects at OSNA. First, we hope to begin a mapping project. In preparation for establishing several walking trails on the mainland portion of the Area, we will need to determine the locations of the current game trails. In addition, in preparation for formulating a detailed weed management program, the pattern of the current vegetation cover will need to be mapped. Volunteer help from our members will be crucial to getting these jobs done.

Also, this spring may see the start of a bird census project that will involve mist netting and banding at a number of locations in the main stem of the Flathead River. If we can find sufficient volunteer help, OSNA will be one of the netting and banding sites in the project.

In addition, this year we will be looking for new ways that OSNA can be used for nature education here in the Flathead. Dan Casey already leads Flathead Audubon field trips to the Big Island in the summers, and the Flathead Audubon Education Committee has incorporated birding trips on the mainland portion of OSNA into their teacher education project.

Keep your eye open for further information on these projects in the Pileated Post. If you would like to be involved in any of them, please let me know. BY LINDA WINNIE

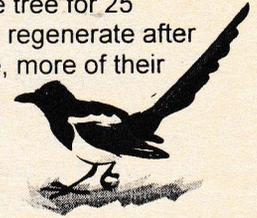
## FINAL FUN FIRE FACTS

CONTINUED FROM THE NOVEMBER AND DECEMBER  
NEWSLETTERS

### Facts about Plants Continued

- **Ceanothus (Snowbrush)**, a chaparral shrub, can sprout only after the heat of **fire cracks their seed coats**. Seeds need heat of 113 degrees F., for 8 minutes, and can survive temperatures up to 300 degrees F. It also has **flammable resins** coating leaves, and **nitrogen fixing bacteria** in its roots that enables it to invade burned areas before the nitrogen fixing bacteria regenerate in the soil. **Lupine, legumes, alder and bitterbrush** also have nitrogen-fixing nodules on their roots.
- **Aspen trees** are fire dependent trees. Fire makes aspen sprout because, like all plants, they contain a growth enzyme that remains dormant until the heat of a fire destroys a chemical that keeps it inactive.

- **Aspen, Rasberry, and Rose** all sprout from underground roots after a fire
- **One million aspen sprouts per acre** were found in Yellowstone after the 1988 fire
- **Lodgepole Pine** produce **serotinous cones** that open with the heat of the fire. These cones are not produced until the tree is 20-50 years old, and can stay on the tree for 25 years. When Lodgepole Pine regenerate after light fires or other disturbance, more of their cones open annually.



### Facts about Animals

- After a fire, **woodpecker populations** may increase up to 50 times (due to increase in beetles)
- **Lynx** benefit from the forest mosaic produced by fire. They use mature coniferous forest for cover, and hunt in recently burned areas (hare cafeterias) for Snowshoe Hare
- The number of **beaver** can increase after fire due to the sprouting of aspen, alder and willow
- **Animals with flexible habitats** and diets thrive after a fire, while those that eat food found only in mature forest seldom live
- Fire creates more **forest edge**, which increases diversity of wildlife
- Many small animals can survive fire if their burrows are at least **3 inches deep**
- **Pine Martens** may die, due to the fact that their escape route is often up a tree. If that tree is torching, they are in trouble! They may not make it after a fire due to the loss of the small rodents they eat
- **Birds** that depend on pine seed (pine siskin, Clark's nutcrackers), come to a burn to eat the seeds scattered
- More than **40 kinds of insects**, mostly beetles, make a beeline to fires
- A **black-backed woodpecker** can eat more than 13,500 beetle larvae in a year
- At least **87 different species of birds** flock to forest fires
- There are more **bears** found in burned areas of Glacier Park than elsewhere during berry season, due to the great huckleberries in burns!
- A **moose and grizzly were both found dead** within the perimeter of the Moose Fire. Autopsy results will hopefully give us a better idea if the deaths were fire related. Grizzly believed to have been killed by a falling tree!

Compiled by Sonja Hartman



# ELNA DARROW RECEIVES FAS RECOGNITION

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

- Working to achieve stronger and more effective ties to and coordination with British Columbia, regarding issues in the shared North Fork of the Flathead River international watershed.
- Launching the Voluntary Nutrient Reduction Strategy, the Commission's on-the-ground effort to achieve better water quality in Flathead Lake and other Flathead Basin water bodies. The Voluntary Nutrient Reduction Strategy under your leadership to date has created two local citizen watershed groups, Ashley Creek and Stoner Creek, and has carried out a number of "demonstration" projects on Flathead Lake and Local streams to show the effectiveness of low cost pollution control techniques local landowners can use.
- Championing the Commission's role as the local watershed group responsible for carrying out a Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) plan for Flathead Lake. Acceptance of the latest draft TMDL plan was close to a reality at the end of your tenure on the Commission.

You have tirelessly advocated progressive approaches to land use planning in the basin, recognizing the close link between better land use practices and the protection and enhancement of water quality. You have also advocated a more comprehensive approach to water quality monitoring in the basin with your representation of the Flathead Basin Commission on several of the Commissions technical committees, including the TMDL and the Monitoring Committees. You worked to strengthen the Commission's public education capabilities and helped create its "Stewardship Award" program, which recognizes local residents who have made significant contributions to the protection of water quality in the basin.

Without your leadership the Flathead Basin Commission would not be the respected organization it is today. The issue of water quality would not be addressed so forcefully and effectively. We are grateful for your key leadership.

Please accept this Flathead Audubon cup as a token of our esteem. May your cup always be filled with clean water.

By Ferne Cohen and Linda Winnie



# BEAUTY OF BIRDS

Flathead Audubon will again be sponsoring a series of classes entitled the Beauty of Birds. This will be a newly revised version using the same format we had last year. It will be held every Wednesday evening in March from 6:30-8:30 in room 233 at Flathead High School. Flathead Audubon volunteers will introduce students to a different topic each week, including anatomy, behavior, feeding, identification by field marks, slides and songs of local birds of the Flathead; we will finish off with a field trip. It is only \$10 per student for the entire series and you can sign up by calling Flathead High School office (751-3500) and ask to sign up for the Adult Education class on birds. (If any one would like to help present a topic during this series please call Linda de Kort at 755-3704 )



# RECYCLE REMINDER

We would like to remind everyone that Flathead Audubon Society has an account with Valley Recycling which is located at 1410 Hwy. 2 West in Kalispell.

What does this mean? When you take your recyclables to Valley Recycling FAS will benefit, just ask them to put the money that you would receive into FAS's account. The chapter made about \$80 dollars last year because of these efforts.

The materials for which they pay are: aluminum cans, newspapers, and cardboard, computer paper. You can also recycle your "mixed paper" (junk mail etc.), tin & steel cans and plastic (#1 and 2) there but you will not be reimbursed.

I know that they do not take Christmas wrapping. A couple of years ago I suggested to the Environmental Club at FHS that we gather used Christmas wrap to grind up and make paper. It caught on; we ended up with a storage room of wrapping paper. After blending, screening and drying stacks of it to make greeting cards for a fundraiser, we still had a storage room full. In the dark of night I loaded up the paper in my pickup; I didn't want the students to know that much of their effort was being recycled in another way. I have not yet found a recycling service that will take it. So now I have a storage shed full and if anyone would like to make a lot of greeting cards let me know!! It is another good lesson in reduce and reuse since we can often not recycle and recycling takes a lot of precious energy anyway. Please remember to reduce, reuse when possible and recycle when necessary. By Linda deKort



## **AMERICAN CITIZENS ARE SAVING THE WORLD'S BIRDS**

**Audubon's Important Bird Areas Program Calls on People to Help Save Globally Important Bird Habitat in their Own Hometowns**

**New York, NY Thursday, November 29, 2001** -- An international program that works with private citizens to successfully protect millions of migrating birds worldwide received its U.S. kickoff today. Officials at Audubon, the organization leading the Important Bird Areas Program (IBA) in the U.S., launched the initiative with events across the country today, highlighting land critical to the survival of birds, and the individuals who helped identify these unique places.

Today Audubon made available its first list of sites that have been nominated for inclusion in the global IBA network. IBAs are places of international importance in communities across America and around the world, nominated by local people. The program is coordinated on a worldwide basis by BirdLife International, headquartered in Cambridge, England. Audubon is the BirdLife International Partner for the United States.

IBA recognition helps protect places that are vital to the survival of birds. "America's Birds are in trouble, and this is a chance for individuals to make a difference," said John Flicker, Audubon President and CEO. "Through stressing action by people at the local level, the IBA program offers ordinary Americans an opportunity to protect globally-important places and help save the birds that use them from decline and extinction."

Audubon seeks a grassroots approach to protecting land for birds and people. The IBA program uses local volunteers to find sites of critical importance for birds. Once identified, these sites' continued health is assured by local land managers and landowners. The program imposes no regulations, restrictions, or costs. Private lands can be nominated for inclusion only if the owner is in full agreement. The program imposes no international controls - but joins Americans with citizens worldwide who care about protecting natural resources, for the good of birds and people.

Nominated sites will be rigorously reviewed by leading scientists, and then endorsed by Bird Life International. "IBA designation is a good thing for the world, the country, and for your community," said Michael Rands, President of Bird Life International. "Proximity to an IBA tells visitors that you live in a great place. You can help tell the rest of the country and world by enrolling in this program as an Audubon volunteer."

Many birds that use U.S. flyways spend parts of each year in Canada, Mexico, and Latin American countries. "Birds are something all Americans, indeed all people, have in common," said Frank Gill, Audubon Senior Vice President for Science. "Migrating birds do not recognize borders; they are the ultimate goodwill ambassadors. The Important Bird Areas program is a way to join people and communities to protect these irreplaceable national treasures."

Audubon's Important Bird Areas Program is part of a unique international effort. Thousands of citizen volunteers and scientists in local communities have been and continue to be the foundation for the program. Their hard work and dedication leads to the identification and nomination of areas critical for birds.

President Bush is urging all Americans to make a difference in their own communities as a way to help the country flourish during this challenging time. The Important Bird Areas Program gives Americans an opportunity to celebrate their own communities -- and protect our national resources. "You don't have to go to your Congressperson, mayor, or town council to do this," continued Flicker. "Important Bird Areas is a people-centered program that relies on everyday citizens to nominate local places and take the lead on conservation efforts."

Gill said the Audubon Important Bird Areas program has already established state-based programs in 40 U.S. states. Audubon will have programs underway by the end of 2002 in all 50 states, and as many as 3,000 IBAs may eventually be identified.

Founded in 1905 and supported by 600,000 members in more than 500 chapters throughout the Americas, the National Audubon Society conserves and restores natural ecosystems, focusing on birds and other wildlife, and their habitats, for the benefit of humanity and the earth's biological diversity. From the Audubon News at [www.audubon.org/news/release](http://www.audubon.org/news/release) for more information you may call at National Audubon John Bianchi at 212/979-3026



### **AND A FEW ODDS AND ENDS:**

- **Don't forget FAS still has some blackoil sunflower seed for sale at \$17.00 a bag and it will be available at the General Meeting on Jan. 14 or you may call Linda Winnie at 755-1406 if you need a bag today!**
- **The FAS Field Trip Committee is wondering if anyone has any suggestions for good Spring/Summer fieldtrips. Are there places you would like to go birdwatching or do you have a favorite place that your fellow birdwatchers would enjoy? We would also like to know if anyone is interested in leading a fieldtrip to their favorite birding location. If you have some ideas or would like to lead a field trip please contact Jim Swab at 387-4299 or [suejim@bigsky.net](mailto:suejim@bigsky.net)**
- **A new calendar for 2002 that highlights Native Landscapes in MT and the weeds that threaten them is available at the Flathead County weed district office, at the Tally Lake Ranger district office and Fish, Wildlife & Parks. They are free and very well done.**



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Pattie Brown, 760 Wolf Creek Dr., Bigfork, MT 59911  
Gail Leonard, 514 Pine Place, Whitefish, MT 59937  
Jill and Mike Fanning, 380 Tally Lake Rd., Whitefish, 59937  
Leslie Kehoe, 1020 Holt Dr., Bigfork, MT 59911  
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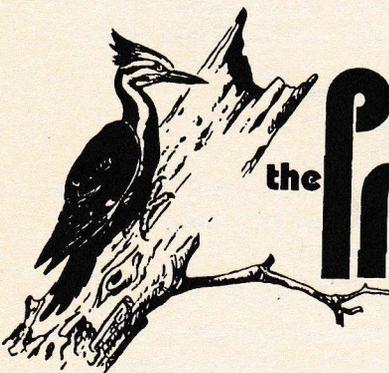
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The Flathead Audubon Society is affiliated with the National Audubon Society and meets on the second Monday of each month from September through May. The regular meeting starts at 7:30 p.m. and includes a featured guest who will present a conservation or nature program. The regular monthly meeting is preceded by the Executive Board meeting. Both meetings are open to all those interested.

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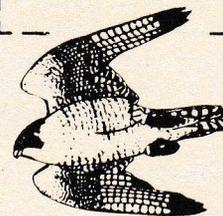
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