



the

# Pileated Post

Newsletter of the Flathead Audubon Society

May 2022  
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Red-eyed  
Vireo



iNaturalist.com

## President's Column

### Mike and Jill Fanning In Appreciation of Long Service to Flathead Audubon

Flathead Audubon wanted to take a moment to appreciate the efforts of two long-time board and committee members, Mike and Jill Fanning. For over half the life of FAS, Mike and Jill have been there to support us however they could, including with their unique sense of humor. Mike and Jill will still be involved in FAS, but they are giving up their last post as our long-running Membership Committee chairs.

Jill joined the board in 2000 and has played a crucial role in enhancing member services at the chapter meetings. For many years she greeted new visitors and provided them with chapter newsletters, brochures, and served on the Hospitality Committee in various additional capacities. For over 14 years, she was in charge of the chapter's Sales efforts, offering a variety of bird-themed items such as note cards and calendars for sale at chapter meetings, and generating some welcome income for FAS. Jill's special project was to promote the use of shade-grown coffee to help preserve the habitat in Central and South America where "our" neotropical migrants spend our winter

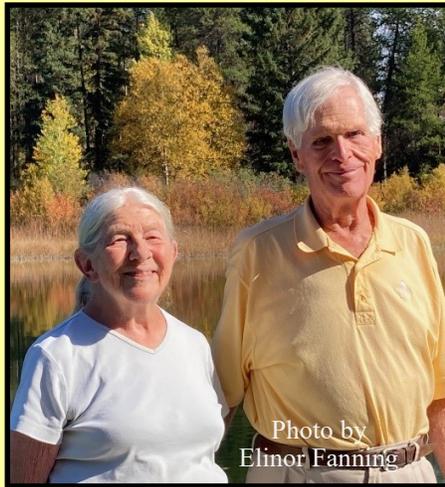


Photo by  
Elinor Fanning

months.

She wrote articles on the topic for the Pileated Post and talked about the issue at meetings. She arranged for Montana Coffee Traders to donate shade grown coffee for the refreshment table at FAS meetings so folks could try it out and so the coffee served at our meetings was bird friendly.

Mike first joined the board in 2002 and served a term as FAS President in 2007-09. During those years, the FAS Education Program was significantly expanded, which caused the FAS budget to double, and then triple. Several years earlier FAS had taken the big step of paying a small stipend to a part-time nature educator to carry out the chapter's Education Program. Just as Mike became President, the stipend was increased to make this a half-time position and Mike led the effort to generate funds to help cover the costs. He spent long hours researching grant opportunities and writing and submitting applications and talking with local non-profits who could help FAS with these costs, even after his term ended. A Finance

*continued on page 10*

**THIS IS YOUR LAST PILEATED POST UNTIL SEPTEMBER**

### MAY FLATHEAD AUDUBON CALENDAR

**Monday May 2, 2022. 5:30 PM. FAS Board of Directors Meeting.** Public Meeting Room, Fish, Wildlife & Parks building, 490 N. Meridian Rd., Kalispell.

**Monday, May 9, 2022. 7 PM. Flathead Audubon General Meeting.** See page 3 for how to participate.

**Sunday May 1, 8:00 AM-1 PM. Breeding Bird Song in the Riverbottom at OSNA.** See page 13.

**Sundays May 8, 8-10 AM and May 22, 7-10 AM. Sonny Boon Memorial Trail, Somers.** See page 13

**Sunday May 15, Lawrence Park Bird Walk.** See page 13.

**Thursday May 26, 8-10 AM and Thursday June 2, 2022, 6-8 PM. Birds and Native Plants, Wayfarer's State Park.** See page 13.

**Saturday May 28, 8 AM-1 PM (approx.) Firebrand Pass.** See page 13.

**Friday June 10, Saturday June 11, 7:45 AM-noon. Lost Trail National Wildlife Refuge.** See page 14.

**Sunday June 12-Tuesday June 14, 2022, Warbler Days at Tally Lake.** See page 14.

**Saturday August 6, Going Batty!** See page 14.

## Kathy Ross

receives

### Conservation Achievement Recognition

At times our childhood experiences make us who we are. That is certainly the case with Kathy Ross. "As a kid I roamed the forests of Missouri exploring ponds for salamanders, frogs, and bugs, tracking small woodland beings around the forests, learning the names of all the wild beings that I encountered. And, then it was gone...all that magical world bulldozed away. Little did I know at the time how that would inspire my adult life. Those wild beings live in me and thru me and they are worth keeping with us on the planet.

Moving to the Flathead in 1991, Kathy fell in love with the forest flora of the area. "It is so unique from anywhere else I had lived in the western states," she says. "The forests and mountains were a treasure of new discoveries for me." Kathy was working in a local greenhouse and within a year started her own business as a landscaper/gardener working with native plant communities – "enhancing with ornamentals".

Kathy encouraged clients to keep the native landscape as much as possible as well as finding alternatives to the use of chemical fertilizers, pesticides, and herbicides. "Knowing that many invasive species started in someone's garden, I removed most ornamental plants that might become invasive from the garden," she says.

But all she really wanted to do was be a volunteer.

Kathy also wanted to surround herself with like-minded conservationists and naturalists by volunteering with organizations she respected. This opened a world of mentors for Kathy. Meeting so many incredible volunteers, like Leslie Kehoe, Linda DeKort, Linda Winnie and Kay Mitchell (just to name a few) encouraged her to join Flathead Audubon and become a board member for over ten years. She participated in Christmas bird counts locally and at Ninepipes for 20 years. She served on the Field Trip committee for years, led field trips, worked on the Education Committee for three years, participated in Road Scholar at Glacier National Park with three FAS Conservation Educators, mentored 6<sup>th</sup> graders at Somers School for four years with the Backyard Bird count, volunteered with Jewel Basin Hawk Watch for 11 years and recruited and trained volunteers to be raptor observers, assisted with Earth Days, Forestry Expo and Birds of Prey Festival. Her articles for the 2020 post "Birds

Need Our Help" became the basis for the "Helping Birds" section on the FAS website which she has authored articles for including an article on using native plants for landscaping called "Birds, Bugs, Berries, and Bugs for the Chicks."

Other projects Kathy is involved with include a cooperative effort with Flathead Audubon and MT Native Plant Society and FWP. She will be giving talks and leading field trips at Wayfarer's Park this spring. Kathy is also currently working with FAS Conservation Educator Denny Olson on an educational video about using native plants to help birds.

While doing all this amazing work, Kathy found time to do Citizen Science projects for 18 years including waterfowl surveys with Gael Bissell, a wolf project in Glacier National Park, and Common Loon and Mountain Goat surveys in Glacier Park. Kathy started a side project at Flathead Lake State Park-Wayfarer's Unit doing weed monitoring and pulling noxious weeds for the last five years.

Montana Wild Wings Recovery Center has

enjoyed the volunteer efforts of Kathy for almost three years. She works directly with the birds and education program. "The raptors teach us, and everyone who meets them," says Kathy. "We humans are there just there as caregivers and facilitators."

Kathy's dedicated advocacy for native plants, insects, birds, and other earth inhabitants and for many conservation efforts is admirable and worthy of emulating. She has been a consistent voice helping people understand the crucial connection between native landscaping/gardening and birds. "Folks who care about conservation, birds, insects, and biodiversity want to do the right thing. If those of us that really care do not make the extra effort, who will? Every single native plant planted can make a difference to insects that specialize on that plant and the birds whose survival depends on the insects, berries, and seeds they produce". Make a difference, one plant at a time, or save an entire native landscape whenever possible. As Audubon says, "Be a Habitat Hero" for the birds!

This is an abbreviated version of the full article that can be found on the FAS website at:

<https://flatheadaudubon.org/conservation/kathy-ross-awarded-lifetime-conservation-achievement-recognition/>  
by Darcy Thomas



Photo by Darcy Thomas

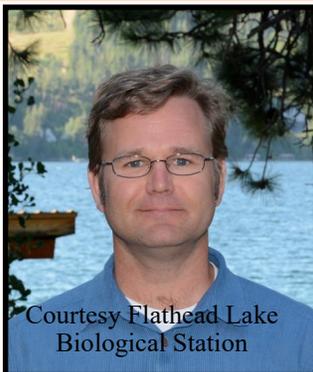
# May Program

## Shrimp, Salmon and Trout: Invasive Chowder in Flathead Lake

presented by Tom Bansak

Tom Bansak will talk about Flathead Lake ecology in the context of the dramatic changes to Flathead Lake's food web due to introduced and invasive species, and the role that fisheries management has played.

Tom is a freshwater ecologist at the University of Montana's Flathead Lake Biological Station who currently serves as its Associate Director. Starting at FLBS in 1996 as a graduate student studying river ecology on the Middle Fork Flathead, Tom has since conducted ecological and water quality investigations



around NW Montana, led research activities on large, pristine salmon rivers in Northern British Columbia and Southeast Alaska, constructed environmental sensor networks, and been active in the battle against Aquatic Invasive Species. Tom is also an educator who gives presentations to any and every type of audience and anyone who will listen. Tom and his family live at the base of the Swan Mountains near Bigfork, spending a lot of time hiking, biking, paddling, skiing, and shoveling snow.

## May Meeting FAS

We're excited to announce that our May potluck and silent auction will be back this year!

**Where: Room 26, East side of Gateway Mall (United Way building), along Glenwood Rd, Kalispell**

**When: Monday, May 9, 2022**

**Doors Open 5:00 PM, Potluck Dinner 6:00 PM, Meeting Begins 7:00 PM.**

We will not have a virtual component to this meeting due to the number of activities occurring.

Please bring your own plates, utensils, and cups. There is no sink to wash dishes so prepare accordingly. Be sure to arrive early enough to look over and bid on silent auction items! Officers and Board Members will also be elected.

### SILENT AUCTION

It's Back! - The annual Silent Auction at the Flathead Audubon May Potluck. Now's the perfect time to gather all of the valuable "stuff" that you might be able to live without. The type of items we're looking for are bird books, outdoor gear, art work, live bedding plants, homemade pies and cookies and bird houses and feeders of all kinds. We'll have a few special items that have been donated (see page 7). Proceeds from the silent auction will benefit our Conservation Education program.

*by Cory Davis*

## From the Board by Gael Bissell, Past President

I want to take this opportunity to thank all of you who read this newsletter for your part in sustaining Flathead Audubon through the last 2+ years. Because of your unwavering interest and support, we have improved our management work at Owen Sowerwine, maintained quality raptor surveys up at Jewel Basin, continued offering field trips, and most importantly, refocused our Conservation/Education program to meet the needs of teachers across the valley. We have expanded our partnerships with Flathead Lake State Park, Native Plant Society, Center for Native

Plants, and Whitefish Community Foundation and successfully transitioned our public programs to Zoom and now hybrid meetings. We have had speakers from across the state and around the region because of this new technology. Your donations of time and money (both as members and through The Great Fish) have been extraordinary. Your incredible contributions and volunteerism made the years from 2020 to 2022 much easier than any of us would have imagined.

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Photo by JP Edge  
Hungry Horse News

## Conservation Educator's Niche by Denny Olson

Sometimes those of us in Audubon might get a bit complacent about why we are here. Birding is fun, our programs are entertaining and very informative and our social get-togethers for events or a field trip give us a sense of comradery. But because we live in a place where natural beauty is nearly mind-boggling, and our mission is to help conserve that natural beauty and diversity for future generations, our primary focus and objectives in *Flathead Audubon* are to engage those future generations with the place where they live. As luck would have it, those goals present a great opportunity. If we can teach our young people using local examples, then learning becomes more concrete, less abstract, and much more effective. Place-based education is literally "in your face" and can't be ignored. It also allows us to enlist millions of fellow "teachers" -- the denizens of this natural world that surrounds us.

The most accessible of those teachers are birds. They are *everywhere*. We can learn about grizzly bears, or wolverines, or cougars, but most of us will never have personal experience or exposure to them. Not true of birds. Four hundred billion of them, of perhaps 18,000 species, inhabit every square inch of this planet, from the Artic to the Antarctic.

As Auduboners, we just happen to be interested in birds. As educators, we look at Montana state standards in life science, earth and space science, math, engineering, social studies, arts and music -- and we say, "Yeah. Birds can teach that!"

So, Flathead Audubon Society has put its meager "money where its mouth is", and we have developed tools for learning that offer high potential for engagement, motivation, and a love of "knowing". We also follow the reams of scientific evidence that show students are healthier, happier and (yup!) *smarter* when they spend significant time outdoors. Full disclosure: our curriculum and other offerings either have outdoor field trips inherent in the unit sequence, or they prepare students for outdoor experiences on their own. Our time, money and energy is spent on education.

Here's a reminder of what we offer our younger Flathead citizens:

We have **18 Learning Trunks** that can be checked out to classrooms for one or two weeks. Some are part of a four-unit sequence with field trips we have recently developed for 7th and 8th graders,

but all of them can be used separate from the sequence. They offer quality hands-on experiences in the full cross-curricular experiences of science, technology, engineering, arts and math (S.T.E.A.M), with some history and social studies also in the mix.

The pandemic years allowed us to produce **Online Videos and Narrated PowerPoints**. Our Flathead Audubon Society YouTube channel gives teachers instant access to Professor Avian Guano, Bir.D., our eccentric, slightly off-the-wall narrator of our Value of Birds trilogy -- doing his own brand of "edutainment" for middle-school-and-up ages. The videos feature some gorgeous bird footage gathered by Birds in Motion, a local Montana nonprofit with the goal of video-documenting all of the bird species in North America!

Some examples:

"**BIRDS ROCK!**" (Video # 1 in the series, 15 minutes) Professor Guano outlines the seven ways that birds are critical to our survival and add joy and wonder to our lives. "**BIRD TROUBLE**" (Video # 2, 29 minutes) We have not been kind to birds in the past (30% of North American birds are gone since the first Earth Day!), and their future prospects are completely dependent on our own attention to science and evidence. Their life support system is our life support system. "**BIRD HELP**" (Video # 3, 28 minutes) The Good Professor shows us how we, with some minor labors of love, can make a big difference in the future of birds and the future of ourselves -- with changes right at home! And, most of these simple changes are fun! The newest project, available in early summer 2022, will be "**NATIVES RULE**", a video narrated by Prof. Guano and featuring local experts on the connections between native plants, native insects who eat those native plants, and native birds who eat those native insects.

And, our online **narrated PowerPoints** include [Learning Bird Songs](#), [Common Birds of the Flathead](#), and [Sandhill Cranes: Voices from the Eocene](#). Our **scripted PowerPoints** for classrooms are: [Ospreys: Ancient Fisher-Birds](#), [Spring Waterfowl Migrations](#), [Winter Birds of Prey](#) and [Bird Brains: a Sidelong Look at Bird Intelligence](#).

We also have **monthly public program presentations** every second Monday of the month, **free in-classroom or assembly programs**, our skilled cadre of **free Guides for school birding field trips**, and our great Pileated Post and website.

At Flathead Audubon, we are busy -- doing good.

*Natural Events To See This Month:  
Red-eyed Vireos arrive.*

*Below is the fourth installment in a new Post series called*

## GETTING TO KNOW OWEN SOWERWINE NATURAL AREA

### Looking Back, To See How Far We've Come!

Compiled by: Pam Willison and Linda Winnie (quotes are from Pileated Post articles)

The annual Owen Sowerwine Natural Area Work Day began in the fall of 2003, and has been held each fall since. The OSNA Work Day began as part of the Prudential Global Volunteer Day program which would award a \$1000 grant to FAS if enough workers came out to help. FAS participation in the program was arranged by long-time FAS supporters Jane and Bob Lopp through Jane's Prudential Financial office in Kalispell. During the 11 years the OSNA Work Day was part of that program, there were always more than enough volunteer workers to earn the grant award for FAS. Various work projects have been completed by groups of volunteers in these work days. Visitors to OSNA owe them a debt of gratitude for helping managing the area and make it available to the public. While the first several years focused on cleaning up river litter and debris, clearing entrances, and tackling the long-neglected weed situation, read on to see what else was accomplished each year.

The 2005 Work Day involved 30 people (4 work crews) and accomplished an amazing amount of work in just a few hours. Brent Mitchell wrote, "It was a great day. Bruce Tannehill lead novice & experienced trail crew members down an 80%+ slope at Greenridge Drive, creating switchbacks and a nice path through a jungle..... Sawyers cleared the big woody debris, swamper removed cuttings from the trail; others clipped back overhanging vines and brush; some dug out steps along the cliff (OK,...steep slope) and installed water bars." Mike Fanning lead a Post Pounding Crew, packing in steel posts and installing them at the survey markers, going south of Greenridge and then east to the river – over 3/8 of a mile. A Bridge Building Crew, led by Bob and Paula Smith, packed in 2"x6"x18' planks and built the plank walkways across the wet areas at the junction of Main Trail and Greenridge. Trail Clearing Crew: Bob Lee sawed fallen trees, Bob Lopp wrangled an industrial brush cutter, and a follow-up crew cleared branches and debris on the Main Trail, all the way to the southern boundary.

In 2006, the managing entities, Flathead Audubon and Montana Audubon put a priority on establishing the legal boundary for the Owen Sowerwine area. A land survey was completed in 2005, so in 2006 installing fencing was on the agenda. On National Public Lands Day (Sept 30) 29 volunteers (25 from Montana Conservation Corps) cut trees and brush from a 6' corridor for over a half mile of boundary. The following Saturday, 24 OSNA Work Day volunteers cleared and scattered the brush, to prepare for a professional fencing crew to install the fence and pass-through gates at the Greenridge and Howard

(southern) entrances.

Free boat rides were given in 2007, but not just for fun and games! The Big Island portion of the Owen Sowerwine area is accessible from the Stillwater or Flathead River. 39 volunteers reported for the Work Day, and boats

shuttled workers to the Big Island to clear a half-mile of the legal boundary line to prepare it for fencing. Other workers stayed



Sheryl Hester

on the Mainland section of OSNA to clear and mow all 3 trails (1.3 miles total). The news article said it best, "Flathead Audubon volunteers, you've done a big service for the community".

Citizen Science began in 2008 with baseline data collected from 12 plot points on the Mainland section during the OSNA Work Day. At each plot point marker, crews "identified, counted, measured, and recorded many different features of the habitat around each stake". These surveys are repeated every 5 years "to compare and document the changes that are occurring". That same day, the "Sign Crew" used wheel barrows to transport the new trail signs, "bulky pieces of cottonwood, averaging 6 inches thick and 26 inches in diameter". Signs were positioned and staked down at each junction and entrance. In addition, volunteers completed the annual fence fixing, trail clearing and mowing, and repairs.

A major improvement was made in 2009 when the two bridges were built and installed on the Greenridge and By-Pass Trails. 37 volunteers contributed 111 hours to build the bridges, pull and cut 30 bags of weeds from the Big Island, and complete the usual trail work. In 2010, the bridges were made safer by the addition of some edging. Sadly, in 2010, Work Day volunteers also had to spend time making costly repairs caused by vandalism to the new fencing and kiosk.

A new 10-year license from DNRC was signed by Flathead Audubon and Montana Audubon in 2010. These past three articles looking back at the history of OSNA give an idea of what was accomplished during the first 10-year license – what it means to say we "manage" the area. It was 10 years of planning, dedication, hard work, volunteerism, and comradery by amazing people. We Thank You!!

## Conservation GOOD NEWS!

by David Manuwal

In the early evening of September 24, 1962 near South Bend, northern Indiana, there was a brief thunder shower with some wind gusts from the north-west. During the following two days, I found 77 dead birds under a 1100 foot tall television transmitter that were killed during that single storm event. The most common species killed was the Blackpoll Warbler (30). This is one of my early experiences with documenting bird collisions. Since those days, ornithologists have learned a great deal more about bird migration and sources of mortality.

It is difficult to estimate avian mortality from the many possible sources. The largest threat to birds is habitat loss but this has not been quantified. Remember this when reviewing the following information on quantified mortality factors. A recent compilation by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (as of 2017) estimates that annual bird mortality in the U.S. from all sources is around 3.3 billion birds. The top threats and the estimated percentage of each are in Table 1.

Table 1. The top threats to birds in the United States annually (U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service website)

Threat	Percent of Total
Cat predation	72.2
Collisions-building glass	18.0
Collisions-vehicles	6.5
Poison	2.2
Collisions-electric lines	0.6
Collisions-communication towers	0.1
Electrocutions	0.1
All other sources	0.3

In 2014, Smithsonian researchers attempted to estimate bird losses due to collisions with buildings of various heights. Homes and other buildings one to three stories tall accounted for 44 percent of all bird

fatalities, about 253 million bird deaths annually. Larger, low-rise buildings four to 11 stories high caused 339 million deaths. And high-rise buildings, 11 floors and higher, kill 508,000 total birds annually. Individual skyscrapers can be quite deadly for birds, but they kill fewer birds overall because there are relatively few of them. By combining these numbers, the Smithsonian reported that collisions likely kill between 365 million and 1 billion birds annually in the United States, with a median estimate of 599 million. (Christine Sheppard and Bryan Lenz, American Bird Conservancy).

**What can we do about lowering bird mortality at our home?** The first thing is to identify win-



Birds killed from colliding with a tall building during migration.

dows that have caused bird mortality. Windows near bird feeders are very likely to cause bird deaths. The most inexpensive remedies include:

- ◆ Apply visible patterns to the outside of your windows. Birds tend to avoid glass with vertical or horizontal stripes at least 1/8 inch wide and spaced 2 inches apart. Patterns of dots at least 1/4 inch in diameters also work.
- ◆ Apply bird decals (raptors)

There are many commercial products available. See the American Bird Conservancy website ( <https://abcbirds.org/glass-collisions/products-database> ) for a more complete treatment of this topic.

## Flathead Forestry Expo

Flathead Audubon will be part of the annual Family Forestry Expo's Family Day on Saturday, May 7th. Our exhibit will be located near the Wildlife station along with the live raptors from Wild Wings Rescue. The Expo is a week-long event for Flathead Valley 5th-graders, But on the last day, families are invited to participate. This year, Audubon will be concentrating

on activities about one of our most common and most amazing families of birds, our four kinds of Chickadees -- and the amazing value of birds to human beings. The expo is located just over two miles north of the Highways 2 and 40 intersection, just off of Halfmoon Road on Tamarack Lane. It's a great (and free!) all-day event.  
by Denny Olson

## MAY 2022 AUCTION AUCTION AUCTION!

Our Annual Meeting is coming up May 9<sup>th</sup> with Potluck and Silent Auction in the Gathering Place, Gateway East and United Way. Over the last two years, we have accumulated many cool items such as rare books, limited edition prints, original paintings, and outstanding photos! Below are our highlights but all of these items can be seen on our website by going to our website at: <https://flatheadaudubon.org/news/auction-items-available-at-2022-may-annual-meeting/>

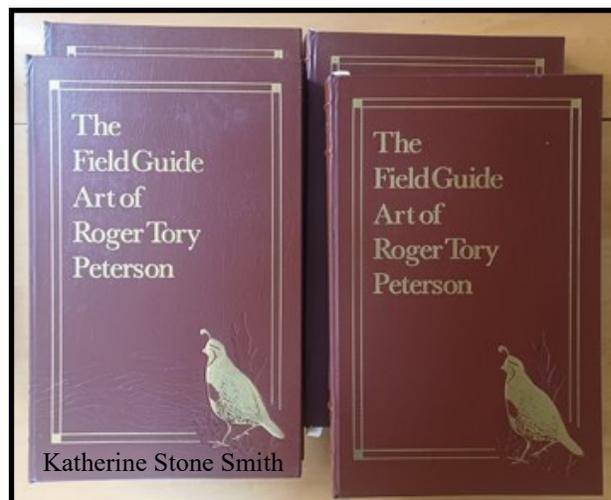
### Highlights:

- ◆ Limited edition beautifully framed “Cardinals” print by David Chapple (donated by anonymous from Columbia Falls);
  - ◆ 2 sets of oversize leather-bound Eastern and Western Field Guide Art books of Roger Tory Peterson (donated by Katherine Stone Smith, Lakeside);
  - ◆ 4 awesome original bird paintings (Great Horned Owl, Western Tanager, Red-winged Black Bird, and kestrel) donated by Tom Roberts (KalisPELL);
- Several 12” x 18” and 10” x 14” landscape and outstanding Clark’s Nutcracker photos by Kathryn Hayes,

owner Kintla Creative LLC. Kathryn is also the proud printer of our Pileated Post and looks forward to her donations supporting our beloved editorial.

See you May 9!

by Gael Bissell



## 2022 NOMINATIONS SLATE

Each spring, FAS elects officers and Directors for their dedication and leadership. This year is no different. The past couple of years have been difficult for any and every organization; Flathead Audubon is no exception. But we have an amazing list of candidates for consideration. FAS elects officers for a two-year term, alternating with president and vice-president one year, and secretary and treasurer the next. This is the year for secretary and treasurer. Both incumbents have agreed to continue in their respective capacities. In addition, all three Directors whose terms are expiring have stepped up to run for re-election. On top of that, there are three other more amazingly talented candidates also running for Directorships for the first time. There is no limit on the number of Directors that can be on the Board.

Please give these nominees due consideration. Then attend the FAS annual meeting in May to vote as well as enjoy a great potluck.

**SECRETARY** – Pam Willison: Pam is running for re-election, having served for several terms as Secretary. She is a Montana native who grew up in the Jocko Valley, and graduated from U of M with a Business degree. Birding is #1 on her to-do list. Through FAS field trips and presentations, State Festivals, and Audubon friendships and resources, she has graduated from being a beginner, and always feel a great sense of accomplishment from making a correct identification while birding, hiking, or working in the yard and garden. Pam has volunteered for Hawk

Watch and the long-billed curlew survey, is a co-chair for OSNA, serve on the Executive, Education and Finance committees, and currently is the Secretary for the Board of Directors.

**TREASURER** – Rod Walette: Rod is running for re-election as Treasurer, having served several terms where he worked on several committees and was involved with projects including work activities at Owen Sowerwine Natural Area. He is actively involved with the Jewel Basin Hawk Watch and Montana Audubon’s curlew surveys at Camas Prairie. Rod completed a Bachelors’ degree in accounting in 1990 and went on to complete a Masters’ degree in Vocational Counseling in 1994. He worked as a Vocational Counselor in the Flathead Valley and Hawaii for 22 years.

### DIRECTOR CANDIDATES

**Margaret Parodi:** Margaret is running for re-election as a Director having served since 2019. She has a Master’s degree in Geology from the State University of New York (SUNY) at Binghamton and worked as a professional geologist in the oil and minerals industries for 7 years. She then ran her own geological and geophysical consulting firm in North Idaho for 15 plus years. She is now employed part time for an artist in Bigfork doing framing, shipping, and sales work. Margaret is currently organizing field trips for FAS.

**Will Beyer:** Will is running for re-election as a Director having served since 2019. Will is a semi-retired

*continued on page 8*

*Nominations continued from page 7*

overseas maintenance, mechanic contractor and licensed Montana water well contractor. He moved to Montana in 1975 and to Kalispell, Montana, in 1982. He has worked in far-away places such as the South Pole, the glacial summit of Greenland and points in between. He loves the outdoors, hiking, cc skiing, fishing, hunting, bird watching, floating rivers and forest management. Will has been involved in Audubon since the 1990s and does a lot of work at Owen Sowerwine

Dave Manuwal: Dave is running for re-election as a Director having served since 2019. He has studied birds in the western US for over 60 years, receiving his undergraduate degree from Purdue University and Master's at the University of Montana and a PhD studying marine birds at UCLA. He taught and conducted bird research for 41 years at the University of Washington's School of Environmental and Forest Sciences, retiring in 2013 as Emeritus Professor of Wildlife Science. He now resides in Kalispell with my wife Naomi and does conservation work and schedules programs for FAS.

Shannon Donaldson: Shannon is running for an FAS Director position for the first time. She has been involved with FAS for about 5 years with her son, Bridger (who is also a Director candidate). She has broad interests in Board topics.

Bridger Donaldson: Bridger is running for an FAS Director position for the first time. At only 14,

Bridger is already an accomplished birder and is ready to step forward into a leadership role for FAS. Bridger has been involved with FAS for about 5 years with his mother (who is also a Director candidate).

Jason Garver: Jason is running for an FAS Director position for the first time. For as long as he can remember, Jason has been fascinated with nature, observing, absorbing, and immersing himself in the beauty and wonderment. As a youngster he spent much more time outdoors than in and his mother would often wonder where he was when it was time for dinner or getting dark outside ... enjoying nature, of course! Catching frogs, tadpoles, and snakes in the swamp, turning over logs looking for salamanders, life was never boring, and time was only dictated by daylight. This love for nature led Jason into a passion for science and a career educating others about its complexity and diversity. He has taught high school science in Montana for the past 14 years, the past 6 years at Linderman Education Center in Kalispell. An important element in his teaching practices is to convey passion and everlasting curiosity for science and nature to his students. Jason's Master's thesis was focused on how bringing students outdoors affects their science learning process. He looks forward to becoming involved with FAS and hopes to be a worthy contributor to its goals and foundations.

Respectfully submitted,

Robert Lee

Nominations chair

## April Conservation Education Happenings

After 14 presentations (and the planning and research for each) in late February and March, (including the FAS monthly program on Bird Intelligence) and 20 hours of volunteer work in OSNA, I looked at the April schedule. I only had the FAS Board and public meetings, my STEAM Alliance Board meeting, 3 meetings with schools about our 7-8th grade Bird Education programming, our Education Committee meeting to write the Education Strategic Plan for 2022-23, a presentation to Flathead Conservation District to receive a grant for 30 new binoculars, a Smith Valley School presentation and a field trip with 7th graders a week later, another field trip with Heritage School, and the all-day Arbor Day educational event for 3rd-graders. Considering that these kinds of events are actually fun for me, April looked reasonable.

But then, finding out that at least 3 and probably 4 schools had decided to do our Bird Education 4-Unit Sequence starting next fall, and receiving a 4th-grade "water trunk" request from a private school, I realized the five trunks needed for those Units had to be done sooner rather than later. So, I researched,

planned and found all the materials, and produced five (5!) new educational trunks (River Bottom Bird Songs and Ospreys, Spring Waterfowl Migrations, Winter Birds of Prey, Wetland Kids! for 4 -6 grades, and "I'm Made of Water" for grades 6 - 12) They contain 3 new scripted PowerPoints, 38 activities and housekeeping info in binders, and 4 seasonal field trips.

I'm starting May 1 with an open-to-the-public birding field trip, and so far in the rest of the month have a for-credit teacher's workshop (with planning and research, of course) on our Bird Ed. Program, helping our Science Fair Award winner with a PowerPoint presentation of his winning project at our monthly FAS meeting, getting all of our FAS teacher / student offerings onto the STEAM website, the all-day Forestry Expo event, presentations to a PEO women's group, and a field trip with Evergreen 8th graders -- on the docket. And May is when I'll be doing most of the shooting, editing and production of our new "Natives Rule!" video. In my world it's what is *not* on the schedule yet that makes planning interesting. Whoo-hoo!

*by Denny Olson*

## Flathead Valley Bird Report

by Dan Casey

### Rare and Notables – March-April

Although mid-April snows reminded us that winter was not entirely over, winter resident bird species such as Snowy Owl and Bohemian Waxwing departed, and spring migrants (swallows, cranes, waterfowl, shorebirds and more) continued to arrive on schedule throughout the period. Snow Geese were seen throughout the valley, and an amazing five goose species were seen together in the West Valley area April 6<sup>th</sup>. See <https://ebird.org/region/US-MT-029?yr=all> for more.

- 03/13 – **Snowy Owl** (1), Lower Valley near Somers; last day reported (Leslie K.)  
 03/22 – **Say's Phoebe** (1), Fairview Marsh (Craig H.)  
 03/23 – **Williamson's Sapsucker** (1), Herron Park (Jake B.)  
 03/23 – **Short-billed "Mew" Gull** (1), Somers; still present 04/18 (Dan C.)  
 03/27 – **Canyon Wren** (1), Columbia Mountain Trail (Jake B.)  
 03/28 – **Bohemian Waxwing** (6), Kokanee Bed FAS; last report of winter (Jake B.)  
 03/29 – **Sora** (1), Creston wetland (Craig H.)  
 04/01 – **Long-billed Curlew** (1), Lake County (anon.); Flathead Co., 04/15 (Craig H.)  
 04/04 – **Dunlin** (3), West Valley ponds; seen by many through 04/07 (Mani G.)

- 04/06 – **Cackling Goose, "minima" subsp.** (4), West Valley (Dan C.)  
 04/06 – **Ross's Goose** (6), West Valley (five goose species present) (Thomas K.)  
 04/07 – **Yellow-rumped Warbler** (1), Lake McDonald Lodge, Glacier NP (Steve G.)  
 04/08 – **Caspian Tern** (2), Polson (Shawn R.)  
 04/09 – **Black-necked Stilt** (1), West Valley Bird and Wildlife Viewing Area (Charles van R.)  
 04/10 – **Black-backed Woodpecker** (1), Lakeside/Blacktail Mtn (Andy B.)  
 04/15 – **Northern Shrike** (1), Brown's Meadow Road; late date (Craig H.)

### What to Expect – April-Sept 2022

The latter half of April marks the beginning of a period of accelerated arrival of spring migrants. New species of sparrows, warblers, thrushes, vireos and more will arrive almost daily throughout the month of May, ending with our latest arriving species (Red-eyed Vireo, Willow Flycatcher, Common Nighthawk) around the first of June. By early July, the breeding season will be over for most local species, and the first south-bound migrant shorebirds will have arrived. By mid-August the variety of fall migrant shorebirds and landbirds will start to peak, and I will be writing the bird report for the first Pileated Post of the fall!

## Awesome Authors!

Our Bird of the Month authors deserve a wonderful word of praise for their contributions to the newsletter this year. Once again, we had a couple of new authors including Dan Kotter who is a new member of the Board of Directors and provided an article on the Swanson's Hawk for this month's newsletter, and Alex Crowley who is a 12-year-old bird lover who wrote about the American Coot and even included his own drawings for the March newsletter. Returning authors included Margaret Parodi with her Sandhill Crane article, Denny Olson with one on the Boreal

Chickadee, Kat Peterson who braved canoeing and hiking to a backcountry waterfall to study the Black Swift for her article, Ben Long with the charming article on the Canada Goose and me, myself and I who wrote about the American Pipit, the Black Scoter and the Ring-billed Gull.

If you love to write and are interested in authoring an article for the newsletter in the 2022-2023 season, please let me know. Darcy Thomas – [darcy@flatheadaudubon.org](mailto:darcy@flatheadaudubon.org)

## CHIRPS & SQUAWKS

### Highlights from the April 4, 2022 Board of Directors Meeting

- Pam Willison and Denny Olson completed a grant application to Flathead Conservation District to be used to purchase a classroom set of binoculars for use during school field trips.
- Flathead Audubon will participate in the planning process for the State Park at Somers, the FWP Church Slough Working Group, and possibly a survey of bird strikes on local buildings.
- In late March, 4 work days were held in Owen Sowerwine and Pam Willison reported that people volunteered over 140 hours to help cut the nonnative common buckthorn.
- Before the next Board meeting, the Education Committee will meet to complete the Education Strategic Plan for next year, and the Finance Committee will meet to complete the 2022-23 budget.

*Fannings continued from page 1.*

Committee was formed to address this funding need, and Mike served as its chair for over 10 years. Eventually a group of grant writers was assembled to help with the effort. It was Mike and this group that carried the chapter through this difficult period and put the funding of our Education Program on a solid foundation.

In particular, we want to acknowledge their contribution to our Membership Committee. Mike and Jill became the Membership Committee Co-Chairs in 1999, and only now, 23 years later, are they stepping down from that position. What started out as a simple job has become increasingly more complicated and demanding. In 1999, the only members an Audubon Chapter had were the members of National Audubon who happened to live in the membership area assigned to it by National. Each month National would mail us address labels for our members, and the Membership Chair had to stick these onto copies of the chapter's newsletter, and mail them out. At that time, National supported the chapters financially by sending each chapter a portion of the dues it had collected from the chapter's members.

Then in 2001-2002 National decided it needed more funding for its own projects and started shrinking the amount it sent to the local chapters. Finally in 2002, National announced that to help chapters make up for this reduction in revenue, they would allow local chapters to recruit their own members and keep all of the dues paid to the chapter by these local members. Mike crunched the numbers for Flathead Audubon and saw that setting up a local membership program would more than make up for the reduction in support coming from National. He advised the Board to give it a try. He would build a database to keep track of all the membership information the chapter would now be responsible for, and figure out how to make it work. Luckily for us, keeping track of this kind of data is exactly what he had been doing in his job at Boeing before he retired; it was his area of expertise.

In March 2003, Mike announced in the Post that FAS had a new "Local Chapter Membership Policy" and provided a form folks could use to join the chapter in this new way. Flathead Audubon was the first chapter in Montana to make this move, and one of the first in the nation. Other chapters watched to see how we would do, and many sent letters or emails

asking how it was going, or to get advice on how to set it up. The recruitment of local members went slowly at first, but Mike ramped up his appeal and the number of local members grew to over one hundred, then to two. It became clear that local people liked contributing to local projects and supporting the local chapter. At about the same time, another complication was introduced. In 2003, FAS began producing two different versions of the newsletter— the usual paper version, delivered by mail, and a digital version, delivered by email. Mike had to keep track of who wanted which kind and work with Jill to get the paper version mailed to the members who wanted paper. He and Jill recruited folks to help them with processing the paper copies each month. Jill became expert at the special sorting required for bulk mailing.

There is not enough room here to list all the other ways Jill and Mike have served Flathead Audubon and its members over the years. Where they have seen a need, they have stepped in to meet it – sometimes for just short periods until a more permanent volunteer can be found, sometimes for longer periods. FAS owes a huge debt of gratitude to Jill and Mike for all they have done for Flathead Audubon – from membership to president to hospitality and sales to serving on the board – and all the rest. Among "the rest" is a very special and unique activity that they created for Flathead Audubon. In 2008, Jill and Mike put together the first FAS Warbler Weekend at Tally Lake, now morphed into our current Warbler Days, and they went on to organize and host this event for another 13 years. This year's 15<sup>th</sup> Warbler Days will take place this June. The event gives FAS members the chance to camp together for a couple of days and nights in June to enjoy each other's company and the sights and sounds and warblers around the Tally Lake Campground. It is yet another extraordinary contribution by Jill and Mike to Flathead Audubon and its members.

Flathead Audubon has been fortunate to have Jill and Mike Fanning as part of our team for over twenty years! Thank you, Jill and Mike, for your many contributions to growing and sustaining Flathead Audubon over this period, and for the thoughtful and energetic and innovative leadership you have provided to support the chapter and its members.

*by Cory Davis and Linda Winnie*

## Great Fish Community Challenge

Flathead Audubon is applying again this year to be part of the Great Fish Community Challenge. We will not know whether we have been selected for participation until mid-June, which is after the mailing of your last Pileated Post until fall. If we are chosen for the Great Fish Community Challenge this year, we will let

you know by way of a Flathead Audubon Fly-by. So, make sure you are signed up to receive the Fly-by! To sign up, go to the main page of <https://flatheadaudubon.org> and fill in your information in the form under "Stay Updated..." way down the page.

*by Kay Mitchell*

*From the Board continued from page 3*

I am particularly and most thankful for our outstanding Board of Directors who are not only incredibly fun to be with but also talented and committed to FAS in a challenging time. For example, Jake and Cory spearheaded our transition to Zoom while also working closely with Mike Fanning to convert our entire organization's membership data base to a new membership program. Dave Manuwal reached out to speakers across the region to provide tremendous programming and provided great programs himself. Rod Walette, Kay Mitchell, Jan Metzmaker and volunteer Gail Cleveland worked magic in our Great Fish preparations that put us on the right track financially. Recently, with their help, we completed the creation of our own permanent endowment with the Whitefish Community Foundation. Pam Willison, while also our Secretary, took on oversight of Owen Sowerwine and improved our weed management and neighbor relations and worked miracles with grants. She, Denny, Will, Tom, Cindy, and many volunteers created our new Education Trail and made significant inroads on the prolific invasive common buckthorn. Darcy Thomas and Margaret Parodi modified our field trips to meet public health concerns but offered more local and shorter trips making them more accessible to the public and perhaps a bit greener due to less carpooling. Dan Casey not only spearheaded the Jewel Basin Hawk Watch but added wonderful field trips near Somers and continued with Warbler Weekend and many others. Derrick Rathe worked with both Flathead Audubon and the Native Plant Society (via Kathy

Ross) to develop cooperative bird/native plant field trips at Wayfarer's State Park while also helping us with our weed planning at Owen Sowerwine. Bob Lee helped us expand our Board, attended state meetings, and contributed sound health advice. Carole Jorgenson, myself, and Dave continued writing letters supporting conservation of working forests and River to Lake projects like Bad Rock Canyon while also tracking so many climate and other national issues. Tom and Cindy Roberts, our Conservation/Education co-chairs, worked closely with our talented Denny Olson to beautifully transition our in-person education programs to entertaining educational videos and digital programs for teachers and families. Joe and Lana Batts represented us well in state Montana Audubon meetings; now Joe is the Board President of Montana Audubon. Linda Winnie and Lewis Young, while no longer board members, continued to crank out our outstanding newsletters. This is truly an amazing and productive board and cadre of volunteers.

We would love to see new and diverse faces step in. Are you one who loves birds, outdoor education, communications, work in a natural area? Do you love data bases, organizing, writing grants? A Board with a diversity of people with various experiences, cultures, and backgrounds makes us more resilient and successful. Reach out to any board member to see where your talents and interests might fit. We look forward to meeting and working with you! To all of you who worked on behalf of Flathead Audubon these last few years, thanks so much! Happy Birding!!

## Membership Changes

If you want to know how complicated keeping track of local and national memberships, Great Fish donations, grant applications, etc. have gotten, feel free to ask Mike Fanning. We realized that, in order to manage all of these complexities and spread the workload amongst Flathead Audubon, we needed to move to a full-fledged donor database.

This move will result in two changes that will be affecting you. In the past, we've tied your membership to the times when we meet (September-May). We asked everybody to renew their membership in the fall, and this renewed membership lasted until the following fall. Things got tricky when we had folks renew late or become members part way through the year, however; for some it gave them only a partial year's membership, for others it resulted in membership last-

ing more than a year. Moving forward, your membership will simply start when you join or last renewed, and continue for the following 12 months.

The second change was inspired by Great Fish. We had a few folks who wanted to donate to Great Fish and use that to renew their membership. This seems fair. So we have decided to recognize anyone who gives more than \$25 as a member. This means that when Great Fish comes around and you give \$25 or more, it will renew your membership! And the added benefit is that your donation will also give FAS the opportunity for Great Fish matching funds.

So be on the lookout in the fall for more on these changes as we roll them out. If you have any questions feel free to email me at [jake@flatheadaudubon.org](mailto:jake@flatheadaudubon.org). *by Jake Bramante*

## BE THE FIRST TO KNOW!!

Flathead Audubon has established an Endowment Fund for the future of our chapter. The Fund is held at the Whitefish Community Foundation. This is a first step toward a goal of complete sustainability for Flathead Audubon. Watch your newsletter for a series

of short articles explaining an Endowment Fund, beginning in our Fall issues. Meantime, if you have any questions, please talk to one of the board members or officers. *by Kay Mitchell*

## WARBLER WEEKEND AT TALLY LAKE June 12-14

Come and join us at The Tally Lake Campground for an extraordinary two days of birding and relaxing. The Pavilion Campsite at the campground has been reserved for us Sunday afternoon, 2 PM June 12 through Tuesday morning 11 AM June 14. There is space for RV's and tents for those who want to spend the nights. This is an ideal time of year to find a wide variety of migrant and resident birds; most notable is that virtually all of the warbler species which can be found in NW Montana are found here. Several of our expert birders will be available to lead us around the campground. Plenty of other activities can be enjoyed as well. You can bring canoes or kayaks, swim, hike on one of the trails near the campground, play ball games on the open grassy ar-

ea, and play board games in the pavilion. There is a fire ring for warmth and grates for cooking. We will have optional potluck meals Sunday and Monday evening around 6 PM. Please bring something to share if you want to join in. All other meals are up to you. Someone will show up Sunday afternoon to get a fire going, scout the area, and start creating a bird list. Please bring firewood if you have it and camp chairs to sit around the fire. If you have any questions contact Jill or Mike Fanning at 862-8070 or [shrd-lu@centurytel.net](mailto:shrd-lu@centurytel.net). Cost of camping is FREE, courtesy of FAS. Just tell them at the gate that you are with Flathead Audubon at the pavilion.

*by Mike Fanning*

## Wings Across Big Sky Registration Open

Registration for our annual festival is now open through our website. We have a PDF of the brochure and a physical registration sheet for those who want to print out a hard copy. Let me know if you have any questions.

Link: <https://mtaudubon.org/outreach/montana-bird-festival/>

**Laryssa Rote**

*Communications Specialist*

*Montana Audubon*

814-336-4739

[laryssa@mtaudubon.org](mailto:laryssa@mtaudubon.org)



## Smith Lake Field Trip Report

Eleven hardy birders braved the cold windy morning on April 10th to go bird watching around Smith Lake. We were rewarded for our discomfort by spending a morning in great company and seeing



many beautiful birds. We saw a total of 31 species. Our highlights included Sandhill Cranes which we saw at our first stop by Kila Pub and again at our last stop on the south side of the lake. We

also saw the Grey Ghost or male Northern Harrier along with his mate. A male American Kestrel posed on a fence post for a long time so everyone got a good look at this through the spotting scope. Several Great Blue Heron flew in from the West over the trees to forage along the lake which was filled with many

coots, geese and ducks. We had both Common and Barrow's Goldeneyes, Greater Scaup, Bufflehead, Ruddy Duck, Ring-necked Duck, American Wigeon,



Mallard and a Pied-billed Grebe. To top these off we got to see brilliant blue Mountain Bluebirds. Three girls ages 9, 13 and 15 were along and it is always nice to see young people interested in the natural world.

*by Darcy Thomas*

## SPRING/SUMMER 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 <https://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 the individual field trip leader listed below. Due to the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic we are taking precautions to ensure safety for all participants. Masks and respect for others' personal space are highly recommended, and we ask you to not share binoculars or spotting scopes. The number of participants allowed on trips will be limited as will carpooling.



### **BREEDING BIRD SONG in the RIVERBOTTOM at OSNA, Sunday May 1, 8:00 AM—1:00 PM.**

Leader: Denny Olson, Conservation Educator for Flathead Audubon. Meet at Kalispell Montessori School parking lot, and bring a snack to munch in the field. This is the absolute peak of river-bottom birds singing at the top of their lungs to establish territories and attract mates. Some are already nesting. Pileated and three other kinds of woodpeckers, two kinds of Chickadees, maybe a dozen warbler species, two kinds of Nuthatches, Osprey, Bald Eagles, two kinds of vireos, a dozen species of ducks, hawks and falcons, swifts and swallows -- are a few of what frequents the cottonwoods along the Stillwater River this time of year. Weather depending, it can be pure action! Contact Denny Olson at [educator@flatheadaudubon.org](mailto:educator@flatheadaudubon.org) or 249-3987 to register. Space is limited to 10 birders.

### **SONNY BOON MEMORIAL TRAIL, SOMERS, Sunday May 8, 8:00—10:00 AM or May 22, 7:00—10:00**

**AM.** Dan Casey will be leading two Sunday morning bird walks along the Sonny Boon Memorial Trail in Somers during this spring migration season. The paved trail follows a portion of the old railroad bed along Somers Slough and offers excellent views of waterfowl as well as a wide variety of land-birds reliant on the diverse riparian habitat. Indeed, 157 species have been reported at this eBird hotspot (<https://ebird.org/hotspot/L1390990>). These round-trip walks will be one mile each way, and will last approximately 2 hours, starting at 8 am. Attendance is limited to 10 people. Please call Dan at 406-270-5941 to reserve spots on the attendance list. Walks will be held on the following dates:

**8 May:** Increasing numbers of new arrivals (e.g. Western Tanager, Yellow Warbler)

**22 May:** Most breeding species back on territories (e.g. Gray Catbird, Black-headed Grosbeak)

### **LAWRENCE PARK BIRD WALK, Sunday May 15, 8:00—10:30 AM.**

Join Karen Nichols and Jane Adams on this birding hike through the riparian habitat and open areas of Kalispell's Lawrence Park. We will walk approximately 2 leisurely miles through forest and paved trails near the Stillwater River and sloughs. We hope to see and hear a variety of resident birds and recent spring migrants. Highlights might include: Sora Rail, Ruby-Crowned Kinglet, Common Yellowthroat, Pileated Woodpecker, Red-tailed Hawk, Osprey, Northern Waterthrush, Black-headed Grosbeak, Gray Catbird, Great Blue Heron, Wood Duck, Vaux's swift, Tree Swallow, and Calliope and Rufous Hummingbird. Please come prepared with rain gear and footwear for possible muddy conditions along the trails. Bathrooms are available at the park. Please bring binoculars and bird id books or apps, if you have them. To sign up or get more information, contact Karen Nichols at [karenben@montanasky.net](mailto:karenben@montanasky.net) or 406-261-6230. Space is limited to 12 participants.

### **BIRDS AND NATIVE PLANTS, WAYFARER'S STATE PARK, Thursday May 26, 8:00—10:00 AM and**

**Thursday June 2, 6:00—8:00 PM.** Join naturalists from Audubon and MT Native Plant Society for a short walk at the Wayfarer's unit of Flathead Lake State Park in Bigfork. You will learn about the native plants and birds that thrive on this lovely east shore landscape where biodiversity abounds. There may be spotted towhees flitting through the lupine understory, warbler species calling high above in the trees, and catbirds searching for insects amidst the spring blossoms of ninebark and serviceberry. The hikes will be less than 1.5 miles. Please dress for spring weather and bring drinking water. Each walk is limited to 12 participants. For more information and to register please call **406-837-3041, ext. 0. This number is a correction of the one that was published in the April newsletter.**

### **FIREBRAND PASS, Saturday May 28, 8:00 AM—1:00 PM (approx.)**

Summer Songbirds and Colorful Native Flora abound at Firebrand Pass Trailhead in Glacier Park. Join in the appreciation of our returning migratory birds shared by Steve Gniadek, Flathead Audubon and Kathy Ross from MNPS. We will explore the wetlands and mixed forest habitat near the trailhead for interesting ducks and many species of neotropical migrants - Olive-sided Flycatcher, Marsh Wren, Veery, White-crowned and

*continued on page 14.*

*Field Trips continued from page 13*

Lincoln's Sparrows, Northern Waterthrush, MacGillivray's, Yellow, Wilson's Warblers along with many other summer avian visitors. Enjoy also the native wildflowers that will begin to color the contrasting wetland/rocky windswept habitat of this area. Contact Kathy at [mtkat67@gmail.com](mailto:mtkat67@gmail.com) to sign up and for meeting place. Trip is limited to 12 participants. Dress appropriately for possible windy, chilly spring weather and bring snacks and water. Easy to moderate trail walking 2-3 miles round trip.

**LOST TRAIL NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE, Friday June 10 or Saturday June 11, 7:45 AM—noon.**

Join refuge wildlife biologist Beverly Skinner and tour the incredible wetlands and grasslands of this hidden jewel west of Kalispell. See nesting Trumpeter Swans and an abundance of shorebirds and waterfowl species associated with Palouse prairie, riparian/wetland, and larch/pine forest habitats of the 9000+acre refuge, north-west of Marion, MT. We will drive and walk along some of the refuge's closed roads with short hikes on uneven ground for better viewing. Meet at the Lost Trail Refuge Headquarters (about 45 miles NW of Kalispell) between **7:45 and 8:00 AM**. For location and more information about the refuge go to [http://www.fws.gov/refuge/lost\\_trail](http://www.fws.gov/refuge/lost_trail). Sign up is required for the field trip and to get more information about the trip, contact Beverly at **406-858-2266** or [beverly\\_skinner@fws.gov](mailto:beverly_skinner@fws.gov). The number of participants is limited to 12 per trip.

**WARBLER DAYS at TALLY LAKE, Sunday June 12—Tuesday June 14.** See page 12.

**GOING BATTY! Saturday, August 6, 8:30 PM—11:00 PM.**

This cooperative trip between Flathead Audubon and MT Fish, Wildlife & Parks will go to a site with known bat activity where electronic equipment will be used to detect the ultrasonic calls of bats flying overhead, and mist nets will be used to capture bats for closer inspection. Wildlife biologists Lewis Young, Lisa Bate, and Jessy Coltrane will demonstrate the equipment, handle bats captured in mist nets, and talk about the amazing adaptations bats have for navigating, catching food, and hibernating. Participants will not be allowed to touch or handle bats. Headlamps or flashlights are necessary and come with suitable clothing for the evening temperatures as the day cools. To sign up contact Kathy at 406-837-3837 or [mtkat67@gmail.com](mailto:mtkat67@gmail.com). **The trip is limited to 20 participants and sign up is required.** Please note that the trip may be modified or even canceled depending on the COVID situation at the time.

**Reminder:** Kathy Ross will be presenting a program on

**CREATING BIRDSONG IN OUR WORLD, ONE GARDEN AT A TIME**

**Thursday, May 5th, 6-7 PM**

Kathy will talk about why the relationship between native plants, insects, and birds is important to understanding the loss of habitats and biodiversity. She'll explore why the simple acts of leaving native plants or planting native plants are one of the most direct ways to help birds and the environment. Participants will gain an understanding of how we can do this in our landscapes and gardens while creating sustainable habitats. 96% of our birds depend on insects to feed their young. Look at your garden from a new perspective through the eyes of the other beings who share the landscape with you. Celebrate the holes in leaves and rethink pretty!

Kathy's talk is limited to 20 participants. For meeting place and to register call [406-837-3041](tel:406-837-3041) ext. 0

This talk is part of a multi-part series co-sponsored by Montana State Parks ([stateparks.mt.gov](http://stateparks.mt.gov)), Montana Native Plant Society-Flathead Chapter, and Flathead Audubon Society, that focuses on the native plants and birds that thrive on the lovely east shore landscape. Coordinated with Kathy's talk are two walks at the Wayfarers Unit of Flathead Lake State Park, Bigfork, where participants will learn about the native plants and birds of Wayfarers. For information on the walks, see FAS Fieldtrips on page 13.

**The 13th Birds of Prey Festival!**



**Save the Date!**

**Saturday, September 17th, 9 AM to 2 PM at Lone Pine State Park  
(Finally, after missing 2 pandemic years!)**





# Thank You!

...to all those that have made donations to Flathead Audubon.

Donations to Flathead Audubon that are accompanied by dedications are listed each month in this space. The full list of 2022 donors will appear in February 2023.

Tribute Gifts April 4, 2022

Janet Downey in memory of David Downey.



Darcy Thomas

This photo was incorrectly attributed in last month's issue. Darcy Thomas is the correct photographer. We apologize for the error.



## 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 my choice

I want my gift to recognize another:

In memory of \_\_\_\_\_

In honor of \_\_\_\_\_

Please send a notification of this gift to:

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_

State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

\*\*\*\*

Donor's Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_

State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Please do not acknowledge my gift in the Post

\*\*\*\*

Please make checks payable to:

Flathead Audubon Society

P.O. Box 9173

Kalispell, MT 59904

**Your gift is tax deductible.**

Flathead Audubon Society is a not-for-profit 501(c)(3) organization. Our federal tax ID number is 81-0447830.

## FLATHEAD AUDUBON SOCIETY DIRECTORY

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# Pileated Post

Newsletter of the Flathead Audubon Society

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**THE PILEATED POST** is published September through May and is sent to members of Flathead Audubon Society as a membership benefit. To become a member or to renew your membership, go to the FAS website or use the membership form below. **Deadline for newsletter copy is the 18th of each month. Contact newsletter editor at 755-1406; or [linda@flatheadaudubon.org](mailto:linda@flatheadaudubon.org).**

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