

Flathead Audubon Society Board of Directors, 04/07/25

Gateway Community Center Gathering Place

Prepared by Michele Tohtz, Secretary

Directors in Attendance: Darcy Thomas, Rod Walette, Pam Willison, Gael Bissell, Cindy Roberts, Tom Roberts, Bob Lee, Ronda Howell, Margaret Parodi, Jake Bramante, Shannon Donaldson, Bridger Donaldson, Carole Jorgensen

Others in Attendance: Jess Garby

The meeting was called to order by President, Darcy Thomas at 5:34 PM

Minutes: There were no corrections to the March minutes. Bob made a motion to approve, Tom seconded. Approved unanimously.

Financial Report:

Rod reviewed the financial report. Carol Daly's generous donation is reflected in the present financial statement. This year remains very similar to last year. Jake moved to file the financial report, Bob seconded. Approved unanimously.

Montana Audubon Wildlife Fund Grant: Rod shared that Dan wrote a thoughtful, informative grant application and FAS received the grant again. The funds will be used for the Hawk Watch.

Policy to disseminate non-Audubon info in social media- Jake showed the very thorough document he created that outlines our possible policy on this issue. We will each read this document and, if we desire, we can send comments to Jake.

Silent Auction Reminder: Darcy reminded us all to look for items to include in the silent auction for the May meeting.

FLT Reed's Slough Grand Opening Celebration – The celebration will be at 10:00 AM on April 12th and Jess will be the speaker for Flathead Audubon. Please RSVP because parking will be limited.

Arts in the Park - The 2025 dates are July 18th, 19th and 20th. More people are needed for Saturday and Sunday. Since we can't commit to helping on those days, Darcy will cancel.

Urban Birding: Jessie Walthers, from the Conservation District, wants to provide an opportunity for urban birding and she would like a representative from Audubon to help. The site is in Evergreen and Darcy has agreed to represent Audubon if no one else is interested.

Education Coordinator update – Jess talked to 240 students this month! She visited six schools twice a month. Jess will be visiting more Whitefish schools in May. Thanks to all the FAS board members who continue to help Jess on the field trips. She has also connected with other conservation organizations in the valley to share information. Jess is looking forward to attending the Audubon Leadership Conference in Montreal this July.

Committee Reports:

History: Linda was not present, so Darcy relayed her questions. Linda has the hard copy newsletters from the beginning of FAS that were in Geri's possession. Is there another set of hard copy newsletters, and if so where are they located. Denny may know if there is another set. The History Committee has most of the upcoming monthly History Corner topics selected for the newsletter through May 2026.

Conservation:

Gael spoke about the proposed growth policy for the city of Kalispell. Laura Katzman would like our input on this. Several important areas, such as the West Valley ponds and part of Owen Sowerwine, are included. A map is necessary to identify sensitive areas, but no map exists. Gael isn't sure how to proceed. The deadline is possibly the end of April. Some data to include in our comments would be helpful. We could use eBird data to compile wildlife usage data. Email thoughts on birding hotspots, and other major concerns, to Gael or Carole.

Field Trips: Darcy shared that she received a comment asking that field trips be on days other than Sunday. We agreed to be mindful of this in the future. Margaret reported on these upcoming field trips:

Creston Fish Hatchery- May 4, Spring Brook Ranch- May 8, Sonny Boon Trail- May 11,

Bison Range- May 13, Wayfarer's State Park- May 21 and June 4,

Glacier Park Birds, near Fish Creek- May 24, Lower Firebrand Pass, Glacier Park- June 16,

Swift Nights- August 8 and September 12.

Jess and Jake are looking into a bike and birding field trip before the Going to the Sun Road opens to cars.

Membership: March was slow for memberships. Gael will man the front table at the April meeting.

Newsletter: Darcy reports that Molly and Julie are doing well on the newsletter. The content list was reviewed. Mike Koopal will be the speaker again at Warbler Weekend.

Owen Sowerwine: Pam submitted the grant application for weed spraying to the Conservation District. Pam got a bid from a company that sprays for Canada thistle. They have been successful on the Harrell Forest trails. Their bid for two sprayings, twice a year, is \$2400. The sprayings will include all invasive species. Gael moved to hire Glacier Weed Control for the spraying at OS, Carole seconded. Approved unanimously.

In addition, Pam and Denny have been treating lots of buckthorn.

Programs: Kathy Ross will do a native plants presentation at the May meeting.

Outreach and Publicity:

Jake changed the Join/Donate link on the website. It now appears on each page. He also reorganized the merchandise page.

Nominating Committee: Bob has information on a person who might be interested in the Conservation Committee. There might be a few others who are interested in helping in other capacities.

Merchandise: The new hats will be ready for the May meeting. Thirty mugs are here and ready to be sold at the April meeting. We debated the selling cost; \$20 was the agreed upon price. Tom showed us examples of the notecards. There will be five cards in each set. The Insty-Prints estimate for 50 sets is \$162. There was also a \$50 setup fee. We agreed to sell the cards for \$10 per set.

Gael made a motion to adjourn the meeting, Cindy seconded. The meeting was adjourned at 7:31 PM.