



# SacajaweaAudubonNews

SACAJAWEA AUDUBON BUILDS ON AN INTEREST IN BIRDS TO PROMOTE THE CONSERVATION OF OUR NATURAL ENVIRONMENT THROUGH ENJOYMENT, EDUCATION AND ACTION.

October 2010

## Calendar at a Glance

October 8th, 9th, 10th	Annual Bridger Raptor Festival
October 9th	Get your bird sightings to John Parker!
October 11th	Sacajawea Audubon Society Meeting
October 14th	Yellowstone Wolf Lecture
October 23rd	SAS Ennis Lake Field Trip

## Dear Fellow Bird Lovers,

I strongly encourage any of you who can to attend the Annual Bridger Raptor Festival. Not only is this an exciting opportunity for educating yourself on Montana's migratory raptors, but the setting is nothing less than spectacular. Hope you can join the fun!

-Mary Cloud Ammons  
SAS Newsletter Editor



## October Program!

**October 11th at 7:00 pm**  
**First Security Bank West**  
**670 South 19th in Bozeman**  
**Downstairs Community Room**

This October Sacajawea Audubon Society welcomes members and guests with announcements of birding activities. The doors open and the social period begins at 6:30 pm. The meeting will start at 7:00 pm. We encourage members and non-members alike to meet, mingle and socialize with others during the social period. Refreshments will be served. Non-members are welcome!

## Wolf Talk

Join Douglas Smith, Leader of the Yellowstone Wolf Project, for a lecture on Yellowstone wolves. This interesting presentation will be held at the Museum of the Rockies on October 14th at 6pm. Hope you all can make it!

## Online Resources:

For more information on Yellowstone Wolves:  
<http://www.nps.gov/yell/naturescience/wolves.htm>

<http://www.greateryellowstonescience.org/topics/biological/mammals/wolves>

A local forum for SAS birders:  
<http://www.montana-riverboats.com/phorum/list.php?Z>

To sign up for the Cornell Ornithology newsletter:  
<http://www.birds.cornell.edu/NetCommunity/Page.aspx?pid=1720&par=YW5uZTI3bUB5YWhvby5jb20%3d>

A community blogpost for bird lovers:  
[welopebirds.org](http://welopebirds.org)

Check out the new national Audubon Website:  
[www.audubon.org](http://www.audubon.org)

## Ennis Lake Waterfowl Field Trip

**Saturday, October 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2010**  
**Meet at 8:45 am at the Museum of the Rockies**  
**Carpool and depart at 9:00 am**

This should be near the peak time for migrating waterfowl and loons. Ennis Lake is one of the premiere staging areas for migrating waterfowl in southwestern Montana. Thousands of ducks can be spread across the lake on any given day. As is typical with high concentrations of birds, there is always the possibility of a rarity being found.

Bring a lunch as we'll be out until at least mid-afternoon. Also, remember to bring plenty of warm clothes as it will likely be cold and windy. If the weather is too extreme, we will reschedule for the following Saturday, October 30.

For more information call **John Parker at 586-5863**.

## President's Comments: Tools of the trade

The 17th-century philosopher Francis Bacon could have been referring to birders of the 21st century — individuals weighed down by binoculars, spotting scopes, maps, compasses, field guides, cameras, and notebooks — when he wrote, "The understanding must not therefore be supplied with wings, but rather hung with weights to keep it from leaping and flying."

Birds fly and our spirits fly with them, yet we remain grounded. Binoculars and spotting scopes expand our contact with nature. They increase our ability to see birds and observe their field markings and behavior. The map and compass (or GPS) enable us to fix positions and to determine motions. The field guide is a ready reference to confirm or refute initial impressions. Cameras and notebooks enable us to record what we see.

But inquiry is the most useful tool. As Bacon said, "'Not by supposition or mere thought but by inquiry learn what nature does and makes.'"

Why is this bird in this habitat at this time of year? What family, what genus, what species is this? By asking such questions, we develop our birding skills each time we look out the window, take a walk, and participate in a field trip or bird survey.

*Anne Millbrooke*

SAS President

## Bridger Raptor Festival 2010

### A Migration Celebration

October 8th, 9th and 10th.

Bridger Bowl Ski Area in the Gallatin National Forest



Dear Sacajawea Audubon Society,

Please come join us for the 2010 Raptor Festival. Sacajawea Audubon Society will be having a booth at this year's Raptor Festival in Bridger Bowl again, this year October 9th and 10th. This year, Raptor Festival promises to be a great event again.

The key note speaker on October 8th is Dr. Steve Running - UM Ecologist and Forestry Professor on the Science and Politics of Climate Change. Please come to all the events If you would like to volunteer to help with taking care of our booth please contact Peter Norlander at 222-4646 or [norlander@q.com](mailto:norlander@q.com) . Also see the Bridger Raptor Festival website at <http://www.bridgerraptorfest.org/> .

*Thanks for coming to the 2010 Raptor Festival!*

## Success Stories from the Montana Raptor Conservation Center

The Ethan and Cody Severson Family from the Churchill Montana area really started something when they responsibly called the Montana Raptor Conservation Center (MRCC) to report an injured Great-horned owl nestling. MRCC picked up the bird, but the owl did not survive. MRCC made a second trip to place a substitute orphaned Great-horned owl in the nest. Later, when another owl nestling was ready for release, MRCC made a third trip to Churchill to place the bird in the Churchill nest. A fourth trip was made in response to another call about a Red-tailed Hawk nestling that had fallen, with its nest, out of a tree.

MRCC arrived shortly after the last call with one Milk Crate and baling.

Close inspection showed that the youngster had not suffered serious injuries, but was too young to securely grasp the branch and still needed a nest. With the hawk parents anxiously commenting from the tree in which the nestling and nest had been jettisoned, MRCC staff member Cynthia Zyzda made her way up the

ladder to install a milk crate securely with twine to a tree branch. The fallen nest was inserted into the crate and topped with the young Red-tail. The parents renewed their parenting responsibilities immediately.



Birds (with the exception of the Turkey Vulture) have a poor sense-of-smell. Nestlings handled by humans do not take on odors that are off-putting for adult mammals whose parent-offspring bonding often includes olfactory recognition. Great-horned Owls are a primary consumer of skunks, vividly demonstrating their total lack of olfactory sensitivity.

The two young Great-horned Owls were liberated in a grove of trees at some distance from the Red-tailed Hawk family. These young owls came to the MRCC in the spring when their nests were blown from their trees. Having been injured in their falls, the young were treated at the MRCC. Concussions and broken wings are frequent injuries resulting from nest falls. With superb vision and hearing, owls have been successfully reintroduced into the wild with only one functioning eye. When wing bones break mid-bone (away from the joints) birds can be rehabilitated with surgery to place a pin that holds the bone segments in place while the bone mends. Exercise and physical therapy strengthen flight muscles before release.

The family, including Olecca, Madison and Samuel have been closely monitoring the birds to determine if they perish, migrate away or need to be recaptured for further treatment. No news is very good news!

## The Nose Knows - Tracking Avian Influenza

Any of you who have visited the Freezeout Lakes during the annual waterfowl migration have experienced the thrill of watching the multitude of ducks, geese, and swans that gather on these lakes and shores. More than likely, those of you who have seen this spectacular migration have climbed back into your vehicle, thrilled by the sight of all those birds, only to notice a particularly noisome smell wafting off your feet. Noxious as that smell may be, those droppings on your feet may one day help scientist to track bird flu with the help of pooh-sniffing animals.

At this fall's American Chemical Society meeting held August 24th, chemical ecologist Bruce Kimball of the National Wildlife Research Center in Fort Collins, Colorado, reported that scientists have trained mice to distinguish between droppings from ducks infected with bird flu and droppings from ducks not infected. In the training sessions, the mice successfully identified the infected droppings 90% of time and when presented with fresh feces not used in the training session, the mice identified the infected droppings 77% of the time. Kimball jokes that "we're going to send people out with mice on leashes." However, it is more likely that dogs will be trained to perform the field sniffing. Already dogs are used to detected altered chemical profiles in a number of diseases such as diabetes, epilepsy, and some cancers. Use of dogs to track avian influenza could be helpful in sniffing out new outbreaks and streamlining the containment process. The research team is now moving forward with trying to determine the exact chemical profile by which the mice identify the infected poop.



**Sacajawea Audubon Society**  
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**Sacajawea Audubon Society**, affiliated with the National Audubon Society, meets on the second Monday of each month, September through May.

**Sacajawea Audubon News** is sent to all Sacajawea Audubon Society members monthly September through May. Deadline is the 10<sup>th</sup> of the month preceding the month articles will appear. Please send to: **Mary Cloud Ammons, 503 Bozeman, Bozeman MT 59715** or [mcammons@gmail.com](mailto:mcammons@gmail.com). Send announcements for upcoming activities to **Jennie Chaiet, jenniechaiet@gmail.com**.

**Change of Address:** Please notify **Sally MacDonald, 222-5752** or [smacbirder@msn.com](mailto:smacbirder@msn.com) if your address changes. When you move or are away, newsletters are returned to us for an extra fee.

Find more at the **Sacajawea Audubon Society Website** at: <http://www.sacajaweaudubon.org/>

### *Mailing Address*

#### **SACAJAWEA AUDUBON SOCIETY OFFICERS AND COMMITTEE CHAIRS**

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Would you like to join Audubon? Clip here: 

#### **NATIONAL AUDUBON SOCIETY**

NAS Membership includes:

- National, state, and chapter membership
- Quarterly Audubon magazine and chapter newsletter September through May
- Admission to Audubon sanctuaries
- Support of conservation efforts

- \$20 for First Time Member  
 \$15 for Seniors (62+) or Students  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Amount enclosed

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_

Zip: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

**Mail this application and your check to  
 Sacajawea Audubon Society**

**PO Box 1711  
 Bozeman, MT 59771-1711**

(N51 / 7XCH)

Montana Audubon: 406-443-3949; PO Box 595, Helena, MT 59624; [mtaudubon@mtaudubon.org](mailto:mtaudubon@mtaudubon.org); [www.mtaudubon.org](http://www.mtaudubon.org)

For direct contact: [shoffman@mtaudubon.org](mailto:shoffman@mtaudubon.org)

Montana Bird Hotline: 406-721-9799 to report unusual or out-of-season birds

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