



SacajaweaAudubonNews

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

February 2011

Calendar at a Glance

February 14th	Sacajawea Audubon Society Meeting
March 26th	Montana Audubon Freezeout Lake Tour
April 25th-May 2nd	Montana Audubon South Texas Birding Tour
June 3rd-5th	Montana Audubon Bird Festival

"Request for Used Field Gear For African Wildlife Studies"

Matthew Becker, Project Director of the Zambian Carnivore Programme and alumnus of many Audubon camps and activities, would love to receive from our group any old binoculars, headlamps, and work/hiking shoes for use by the native Zambian research workers. If you want to donate, contact Mike Becker in Harrison at (406) 685-3632 for questions and pick-up. Thanks!



Cooperative Conservation in the Madison Watershed

Sacajawea Audubon Society Meeting
February 14, 2011, at 7:00 pm
Downstairs Community Room
First Security Bank South 19th
670 South 19th Street, Bozeman

Madison Watershed Coordinator Sunni Heikes-Knapton will discuss the Madison Watershed Partnership that has developed a cooperative approach to resource and conservation concerns for the Madison River watershed. She will discuss the background of the partnership, current activities, accomplishments to date, and the goals for the future. Her presentation will cover the participating organizations: Madison Conservation District, formed in 1946; Madison Valley Ranchlands Group, founded in 1996; and the Madison River Foundation, established in 2003.

Heikes-Knapton began working as the first Watershed Coordinator for the Madison River in June 2009. She earned her bachelor's degree in biology and master's degree in land rehabilitation at Montana State University in Bozeman.

Originally from South Dakota, she has been in Montana since 1993. Her office is in Ennis, where she currently lives with her husband and two children.

Birding with John James Audubon

John James Audubon spent the summer of 1843 at Fort Union on the Missouri River, near the mouth of the Yellowstone River. He and members of his party often crossed the Missouri to hunt and explore in what became the territory and later state of Montana.

Audubon traveled overland from the Missouri River twenty miles up the Yellowstone on July 15th, and he returned to Fort Union the next day. Westbound, his party saw a Grouse, shot a Red-winged Starling, and heard a Short-billed Marsh Wren. That evening Audubon caught four catfish using the Red-wing as bait. The next day, eastbound, the party saw seven or eight Grouse, a Sand-hill Crane, and "several parcels of Ducks." A later search for "Cocks of the Plain"—Sage Grouse—along the Yellowstone found none.

Among the species seen west of the Missouri River that summer were the White-headed Eagle, Red-cheeked Woodpecker, Sharp-tailed Grouse, Sand-hill Crane, Blue-winged Teal, Green-wing Teal, Black Tern, Peregrine Falcon, Cliff Swallow, Plover, Dove, Curlew, Raven, Magpie, and Ducks. Audubon saw "a fine large Hawk... with the whole head white" that he concluded was a species not yet described.

Finding the species Audubon listed in 1843 could be an adventure today!

Anne Millbrooke
 SAS President

Montana Audubon's Annual *Wings Across the Big Sky* Bird Festival Glasgow and Your Lodging Options

A small town like Glasgow, Montana*, might not have a plethora of lodging choices, but Montana Audubon has come up with several ideas for the annual bird festival—thanks to the local Bird Festival Committee and Chamber of Commerce. The Cottonwood Inn (www.cottonwoodinn.net) will likely be first choice for many attendees: It will be the stage for festival activities: registration, lectures, meals, banquet, etc. Currently Montana Audubon has 85 rooms blocked out for festival-goers on Friday and Saturday nights. (One Queen/ King bed at \$70 per night or two King/ Queen beds at \$75 per night) Make your reservations soon!

In addition:

- Campbell Lodge, 534 3rd Ave S, Glasgow – 406-228-9328
- La Casa Motel, 238 First Ave N-Hwy 2, Glasgow – 877-228-9311 / 406-228-9311
- Fort Peck Hotel, 175 South Missouri Street, Fort Peck – 800-560-4931 / 406-526-3266
- Lakeridge Motel & Tackle, 6004 MT Hwy 24 S, Fort Peck – 888-554-8125 / 406-526-3597

Carbon Neutral & Transportation

Once again, *Wings Across the Big Sky* will strive to be a carbon neutral event. Montana Audubon will track the festival emissions, look for ways to reduce them, and offset what cannot be avoid (more information will be on the Montana Audubon website soon). Please consider carpooling options! Montana Audubon also plans for vans to depart from major cities to Glasgow based on demand. If you are interested in this travel option, please notify Larissa Berry at lberry@mtaudubon.org.

*Refer to last month's Montana Audubon newsletter for "save-the-date" (June 3–5), brief description of the 3-day festival, which includes a Friday "pre-festival" day of workshops, and our *campground/RV recommendations*. All of the above information is also included on the website complete with links to hotel websites: www.mtaudubon.org (click on the Bird Festival link on home page). Moreover, look for your festival registration brochure to arrive in early March. As always, happy birding!

June 3–5

Montana Audubon's Annual *Wings Across the Big Sky* Bird Festival

Cottonwood Inn

Glasgow, Montana

Contact: Larissa Berry, lberry@mtaudubon.org

406-443-3949



Bird Notes

A Greater Scaup was seen at Central Park Pond, December 21st, by Ed Harper. **Greater Scaup** is a terrific find anytime of year in this area of Montana, but this is the first one to be seen in this corner of the state during the winter.

On January 1st, Robin and Richard Wolcott were amazed to see eleven species of birds on just a short stretch of Carpenter Road west of Logan. Even more surprising were the **12 Western Meadowlarks** among the more common winter residents.

Charles Spangler, who lives near Emigrant, reports that approximately 100 rosy finches have been frequenting his feeders since Thanksgiving. Unlike the previous two winters, when **Black Rosy Finches** made up about 50% of the flock, this winter they account for only about 10% of the rosy finches. Charles also has had a **Northern Harrier** coursing over the property off and on this winter.

-John Parker

Thank you to all our sharp-eyed birders for reporting your great sightings. Please report your Bird Sightings by the 9th of the month to John Parker at 586-5863 or conundrum@imt.net

Christmas Bird Count Summary for 2010



Once again, a big thank you to all the participants who helped with this year's Christmas bird counts. There was a high turnout for all the local bird counts, with a least a couple of the counts having more people than ever before. All of the count days occurred when the weather was relatively benign. Bozeman's count was the coldest, with most of the day remaining in the single digits, while the temperature during the Ennis count climbed to the upper forties. The mild weather, and the high level of participation, was certainly a factor in all five of the counts tallying record high numbers of species. Surprisingly with such a variety of species seen, only one new species was added to any of the count circles' cumulative species totals.



The Bozeman count equaled the record high of 59 species, and had record high numbers of individuals for 8 species. Of particular note were the 50 Bald Eagles, which was well beyond the old high count of 36 eagles. The new high count of 15 Brown Creepers was an impressive fifty percent higher than the previous record high. And of course, the Eurasian Collared-Dove numbers continue to explode, with 231 birds seen from nearly all corners of the count area. Like most years, almost all of the groups added species that were not seen on any other part of the circle. Once again, the only group to find Common

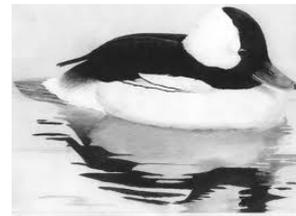
Redpolls was the team covering the southeast quadrant.

On the Ennis count, the old record high of 55 species was shattered by 6 species. Not only that, but the old high number (3,894) of individual birds was replaced with the new benchmark of 7,902 birds. Canada Goose, Mallard, and Bohemian Waxwing accounted for 70% of the total birds seen. Another remarkable number from the Ennis count were the 15 species of waterfowl scattered across the small pieces of open water.



Especially notable were the Tundra Swan, Canvasback, Redhead, and 6 Ruddy Ducks. But the bird of the day was the single American White Pelican, flying over the Valley Garden fishing access site, north of Jeffers.

A pleasant surprise for the Livingston counters was the lack of wind on count day. There were 59 species of bird seen within the count circle. Three species of jays, Blue Jay, Steller's Jay, and Pinyon Jay were a nice addition to the count.



The total number of species counted on the Three Forks count was well above expectations, with a new high count of 61 species. The 2 Wood Ducks discovered northwest of Logan were a first for the Three Forks count. Other uncommon birds seen were: Bufflehead, American Coot, White-crowned Sparrow, Harris Sparrow, Lapland Longspur, and Snow Bunting. There were an extraordinary 11 species of raptors counted within the circle, including new high counts for Bald Eagle, Sharp-shinned Hawk, Cooper's Hawk, Red-tailed Hawk, and Rough-legged Hawk. In all there were an amazing 18 species with new high numbers.

Not to be outdone, the West Yellowstone count set a new high for species with 40. Considering this circle's harsh climate and limited habitat types, this number of species is quite impressive. The 301 Trumpeter Swans seen on the edge of Hebgen Lake would make anyone's day. The Ring-necked Ducks were the only ones found on any of the counts. New high numbers for Pine Grosbeak and Evening Grosbeak, along with good numbers of Golden-crowned Kinglets and Pine Siskins were noted.

Thank you again to all who participated. We look forward to seeing all of you again next year.

-John Parker



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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 10th of the month preceding the month articles will appear. Please send to: **Mary Cloud Ammons, 503 Bozeman, Bozeman MT 59715** or 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 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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	Loreene Reid	600-6666	
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Webmaster	Jeff Pentel	586-3534	jpentel@wispwest.net

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; www.mtaudubon.org

For direct contact: shoffman@mtaudubon.org

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

The Sacajawea Audubon Society Newsletter is Printed on 100% Recycled Paper