



# SacajaweaAudubonNews

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

**December 2011**

## Calendar at a Glance

Dec 12th	SAS Monthly Meeting
Dec 14th	Ennis Christmas Bird Count
Dec 17th	Bozeman Christmas Bird Count
Dec 18th	West Yellowstone Christmas Bird Count
	Livingston Christmas Bird Count
Dec 26th	Three Forks Christmas Bird Count
March 15th-18th, 2012	Rivers & Wildlife Celebration
June 8th-10th, 2012	Wings Across the Sky

## SAVE THE DATE...

...for the 42nd annual **Rivers and Wildlife Celebration** held each year in Nebraska and this year from March 15-18, 2012. Gather with wildlife enthusiasts from around the world to celebrate the annual migration of 500,000 sandhill cranes and millions of waterfowl through the heart of the Central Flyway. Visit [nebraskacranefestival.org](http://nebraskacranefestival.org) for more information about keynote speakers and birding activities. Registration will open in January!

## Conservation in the Gallatin Valley

**Monday December 12th at 7:00 p.m.**  
**Hope Lutheran Church**  
 2152 W. Graf Street (off of South 19th) in Bozeman

Penelope Pierce, Executive Director of the Gallatin Valley Land Trust (GVLT), will present a program on Conservation in the Gallatin Valley at the Sacajawea Audubon Society's meeting on December 12. She will cover conservation accomplishments to date, including recent work performed at the trailhead and in the watershed at Sourdough Canyon, and opportunities for the future. GVLT is enthusiastic about collaborative efforts to maintain or enhance the quality of land, water and wildlife in the region. This program is an opportunity to learn about habitat protection and environmental stewardship for community-based conservation efforts.

Founded in 1990, Gallatin Valley Land Trust has had a role in preserving more than 56 square miles of land in the valley and neighboring communities. Using voluntary conservation easements, GVLT works with landowners and other interested parties to arrange conservation agreements. All efforts are collaborative, and all resulting easements are voluntary. Penelope Pierce became executive director of the GVLT in the fall of 2010. Previously she had been the U.S. Regional Director for the Yellowstone to Yukon Conservation Initiative, and before that an land-use attorney in Seattle. Currently, she serves on the Board of Directors of the Western Environmental Law Center.

The Sacajawea Audubon Society invites the public to attend its meetings and participate in its field trips, listed on the chapter's website at [www.sacajaweaaudubon.org/](http://www.sacajaweaaudubon.org/).

## Congratulations to Andrew Guttenberg!



The American Birding Association's *Birding* magazine features on its November cover artwork by Andrew Guttenberg, a member of our chapter, a college student, and an artist extraordinaire.

*Birding* magazine features articles about field identification, bird finding, bird conservation, and birder education. Andrew's illustration features three Snowy Plovers, Gulf Coast subspecies, in a sandy scene. In his two-page, self-illustrated article "About the Cover Art," Andrew said, "The main challenge was to keep the plovers visible, but retain the cryptic color camouflage that makes the small plovers famous." He added that drawing this cover "whetted my appetite for a Gulf Coast birding trip!"

Congratulations, Andrew!

*Anne Millbrooke*

**President**

**Sacajawea Audubon Society**

## Bird Notes

Participating in the local Important Bird Area surveys is a wonderful opportunity for members to be involved with Sacajawea Audubon. Not only are the participants helping to gain a better knowledge of current breeding and migrant bird populations, but they are also documenting information for long term trends on a much greater scale. One of the side benefits of taking part in the IBA surveys is the possibility of seeing interesting and unusual birds. While helping with the October 29<sup>th</sup> Madison Valley IBA survey, the team of David Hoag, Audrey Evers, and Joel Evers found a **Pacific Loon** on the east side of Ennis Lake. Meanwhile, as the survey teams were counting waterfowl numbers on the west side of Ennis Lake, Kathryn Hiestand located a female **Surf Scoter**. Both the Pacific Loon and Surf Scoter are species that are documented only about once or twice annually on this area's lakes.

On November 3<sup>rd</sup>, Mike Myers and Mike Becker were quite excited to see a **Ferruginous Hawk**, as they are seldom seen in this area that late in the year. While they were northeast of Harrison they spotted this large buteo, as it struggled to make headway against a fierce south wind.

The rarest bird reported in southwest Montana this fall, was the **Red Phalarope** Andrew Guttenberg and Radd Icenoggle discovered at Silver Lake west of Anaconda on October 31<sup>st</sup>. This most pelagic of the phalaropes, which breeds in the high arctic, seldom strays inland during migration. This is only the 14<sup>th</sup> time this shorebird has been documented in Montana.

On her regular walks past the pond off of Davis Road in northwest Bozeman, Madeline Lieb has been seeing a tremendous variety of waterfowl on the pond, including several rarities. On October 13<sup>th</sup>, she was lucky to see four **White-fronted Geese**, and a female **White-winged Scoter** on the pond. Both of these species of waterfowl are seen less than annually in our area. This would only be the seventh record of the goose for the Bozeman latilong.

Mary Cloud Ammons has had a pair of **Downy Woodpeckers** frequenting her yard near Beall Park in Bozeman. This year round resident, which readily comes to feeders and suet, will liven up any winter day. Also in north Bozeman, Annie Bockus saw an amazingly late **Wilson's Warbler**. This Wilson's Warbler was associating with a flock of chickadees that were in her yard on November 8<sup>th</sup>.

The north end of the Sourdough Nature Trail once again proved to be productive birding for Robin Wolcott. On October 1<sup>st</sup> Robin found a **Fox Sparrow** along the trail. Then twelve days later, she saw a **Nashville Warbler** in nearly the same spot.

In a matter of three days Mike and Stephanie Becker had a couple of transient birds pass through their yard near Harrison. First on October 13<sup>th</sup> a **Blue Jay** came through, and then on October 16<sup>th</sup> a **White-throated Sparrow** visited the feeder in the company of numerous White-crowned Sparrows.

-John Parker

Thank you to all our sharp-eyed birders for reporting your great sightings. Please report your Bird Sightings by the 9<sup>th</sup> of the month to John Parker at 586-5863 or [conundrum@imt.net](mailto:conundrum@imt.net)

## Some Raptors have Leg Warmers...

The earth has officially turned its cheek toward winter. The morning frost, darker days, and snowfall have forced us to dig out the bin of winter clothes. Humans seem to have an article of clothing for just about every inch of skin that can be exposed to the soon-to-be bitter cold. But how do our feathered friend predators, the raptors, handle a Montana winter?

Many birds of prey have natural leg warmers- feathers down to their feet. Golden eagles, ferruginous hawks, rough legged hawks, and several owls have feathered legs as an added warming bonus rather than a fashion trend. But, in general, raptors must regulate their metabolism. Their normal body temperatures are higher than humans, ranging from about 100.4 ° F to 107.6° F (Brooke & Birkhead, 1991). And birds of prey have relatively large

hearts to add some power in pumping and warming the blood.



Just like us, increasing activity can certainly warm a bird's body. We have to jog, go to spin classes, and do yoga to break a sweat, but birds of prey are lucky enough to be able to fly to warm up. Have you ever seen a hawk, sitting on a power pole in the winter, looking very burly, with an exaggerated girth? Raptors fluff up their feathers to insulate and hold in the warm air, much like we bundle up in our puffy coats to

venture out. They also shiver and tuck exposed body parts into layers of feathers.

Humans have adapted to Montana winters with warm homes, hot beverages, and fleecy layers of clothes. While we may not be cool enough (or warm enough) to have permanent leg warmers, we can definitely appreciate the physiology that allows birds of prey to endure the long, cold winters. So the next time you see one perched on a pole or in a tree at the height of winter, just imagine how long the season must seem to them.

Help our feathered friends and report injured birds of prey quickly! Call Montana Raptor Conservation Center at 406.585-1211

-Cynthia Zyzda

Montana Raptor Conservation Center

**FOR YOUR CALENDAR, MARK IN INK:*****Wings Across the Big Sky*****June 8–10, 2012, Kalispell, Montana**

The time has arrived! ... to begin planning and spreading the word that **Montana Audubon's Annual Bird Festival *Wings Across the Big Sky*, co-hosted by Flathead Audubon Society**, is June 8–10 in Kalispell. We anticipate a great turnout, but as always, not without your help and enthusiasm: Invite your out-of-state and nearby friends, birders and nonbirders alike, to visit the Flathead Valley and surrounding areas where you can plan on participating in abundant festival activities, including for the second time, the popular pre-festival conservation workshops that were introduced last June at our Glasgow festival. (See <http://www.mtaudubon.org/birdwatching/festival.html#work> on our website.)

Our theme this year, "Birding and Conservation: The Crown of the Continent," will bring in top-notch experts and speakers from all around

the state for the Saturday afternoon presentations and new and ever-popular guided field trips, which will include nearby Glacier National Park (popular for Harlequin Ducks, American Dippers, Northern Hawk Owls among many other species) and Flathead Valley's wetlands and riparian areas with a large variety of migrating waterfowl and neotropical visitors. Pre- and post-festival field trips beyond the Valley are also in the planning stages. And as always, you can count on fabulously fun Friday and Saturday evenings with new and traditional events in the works.

Festival headquarters is located at the Hilton Garden Inn on the south edge of Kalispell off of US Highway 93. We are looking forward to working with the Hilton team on conference facility logistics and service. The venue is adequately spacious and centrally located for convenient access to field

trip destinations. Noteworthy too, is the short distance (15 minutes by car) to Flathead Lake, the largest natural freshwater lake west of the Mississippi in the lower 48 states. Options for additional accommodations and services near the festival headquarters will be provided in forthcoming articles.

Each month we will continue to feature developing news on Bird Festival 2012. Stay tuned!

For more information contact Bird Festival Coordinator, Larissa Berry at [lberry@mtaudubon.org](mailto:lberry@mtaudubon.org) or 406-443-3949.

**Come join the fun in one of our area's Christmas Bird Counts!**

The Christmas counts, started in 1900, are an opportunity for beginning and expert birders to get together and enjoy this holiday tradition. For more information, contact the count compilers. Please Contact the area compiler before the count, as this will give them the opportunity to plan and organize the count before the count day. There is a \$5.00 (kids are free) participation fee. This money is sent to the National Audubon Society to pay for compiling and publishing the results of all of the Christmas Bird Counts.

**Ennis** Wednesday, December 14<sup>th</sup>  
 Compiler: Robin Wolcott 582-0070  
 Meet at Yesterdays Café in the Ennis Pharmacy,  
 Ennis at 7:30 AM

**West Yellowstone** Sunday, December 18<sup>th</sup>  
 Compiler: John Heinie (w) 646-7001 (h) (406)640-0124  
 Meet at the Grizzly and Wolf Discovery Center  
 West Yellowstone at 8:30 AM

**Bozeman** Saturday, December 17<sup>th</sup>  
 Compiler: John Parker 586-5863  
 Meet at Perkins Restaurant, 2505 West Main,  
 Bozeman, between 7:00-7:30AM

**Livingston** Sunday, December 18<sup>th</sup>  
 Compiler: Sally MacDonald 222-5752 or 223-9167  
 Meet at the Best Western Yellowstone Inn  
 Livingston between 7:00-7:30 AM,  
[smacbirder@msn.com](mailto:smacbirder@msn.com)

**Three Forks** Monday, December 26<sup>th</sup>  
 Compiler: Dennis Flath 406-539-1145  
 Meet at Bair's Truck Stop (Flying J at the  
 South side of the Belgrade Interchange) at 7:00 AM





**Sacajawea Audubon Society**  
**P.O. Box 1711**  
**Bozeman, MT 59771-1711**

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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).

**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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**Membership Application**

**National Audubon Society**  
 (Includes chapter membership)



- National, State and Chapter Audubon Membership
- National Audubon Magazine
- Monthly Sacajawea Audubon newsletter September through May by surface mail or E-mail
- Admission to National Audubon sanctuaries
- Support of National Audubon conservation efforts

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

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

**City:** \_\_\_\_\_

**State:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Zip:** \_\_\_\_\_

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\_\_\_\_\_ **\$20 First Time Member**

\_\_\_\_\_ **I would like to receive the chapter newsletter by E-mail only.**

Mail your check and application to:

**Sacajawea Audubon Society**  
**Attn: Membership**  
**P.O. Box 1711, Bozeman, MT 597711711**  
 (N51)

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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