



SacajaweaAudubonNews

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

January 2013

Calendar at a Glance

| | |
|----------|-------------------------------|
| Jan 9th | Bird Sightings to John Parker |
| Jan 14th | SAS Meeting |
| Jan 15th | Newsletter Submissions Due |



*Streaked , barred tail feathers
Consumer of Eurasian
Collared doves, Oh Yeah*

The Bridger Raptor Count The Inside Story

Monday January 14th , 2012 at 7:00 p.m.
Hope Lutheran Church
2152 W. Graf Street (off of South 19th) in Bozeman

Join us for the first meeting of the year!

The Sacajawea Audubon Society meets the second Monday of the month (September through May) at 7:00 p.m., at the Hope Lutheran Church, 2152 W. Graf Street (off of South 19th) in Bozeman. We invite the public to attend our meetings and participate in our field trips.



SAVE the DATE

2013 CONVENTION // JULY 12-15
SKAMANIA LODGE // STEVENSON, WASHINGTON



Get your Audubon on!

After 13 years, the Audubon Convention returns.

Join Audubon staff, volunteers, and Chapter leaders to learn about how our work contributes to Flyways conservation.

Experience four days of cutting-edge science, networking, birding and FUN in the Pacific Northwest.

For more information and to receive email updates visit www.audubon.org/2013convention

Bird Notes

Redpolls everywhere. If you have a bird feeder, or have spent some time traveling the back roads in this area, chances are you've seen some **Common Redpolls**. This winter is already shaping up to be the greatest irruption of redpolls since 2001-2. A few redpolls make it to Montana most winters (Common Redpolls have been seen on 35 of 73 of Bozeman's Christmas Bird Counts), but it's unusual to see them in such numbers. This irruption is occurring across the breadth of the northern states. These irruptions of northern "winter finches" are caused by a poor crop of their primary food sources. In the case of redpolls, that means alder and birch catkins. The plumage of this gregarious finch is highly variable, with age, sex, and different races all a factor in the feather patterns and color in this small, but beautiful bird.

With these large flocks of Common Redpolls, there is the possibility of finding the much rarer and closely related Hoary Redpoll (Hoary Redpolls have been seen on 2 of 73 Bozeman's Christmas Bird Counts). On November 28th, while Forrest Rowland and I were sorting through a flock of approximately 170 Common Redpolls, off of Springhill Road, we were delighted to find a single **Hoary Redpoll** in the mix.

The only bird I saw floating on the pond at Black's Ford west of Bozeman, November 19th, turned out to be **White-winged Scoter**.

A late migrating **Red-necked Grebe** was seen on Cattail Lake off of Davis Road in northwest Bozeman, November 14th, by Mike Myers. With the warm weather this past fall keeping the ice off the area's waters, many waterfowl stayed around longer than expected.

On November 25th, Andrew Guttenberg discovered an adult gray phase **Gyr Falcon** north of Bozeman. Three days later, Mike Myers saw the same (?) adult gray phase Gyr Falcon several miles to the west.

A lingering bird of another sort was the **Lewis' Woodpecker** that monopolized Kirk Horn's feeder near Hebgen Lake, from October 26th till November 6th. In our area there is only one other record for Lewis' Woodpecker between early October and May.

From early November till December a **Northern Shrike** took up residence around Jeff Pentel's shop and feeder, near the Bear Creek exit, east of Bozeman.

Joan Ryshavy was quite surprised to see six Western Meadowlarks along Linney Road so late in the fall, on November 16. In the same area, along Cameron Bridge Road, Terry Danforth saw a Western Meadowlark on November 12th.

White-winged Crossbills are another northern bird prone to periodic irruptions, when cone crops fail in the northern latitudes. I was very excited to hear that Anne Reilly spotted three **White-winged Crossbills** in a spruce tree off of Highland Boulevard, November 12th. Apparently that was just the standing room only crowd from Sunset Hills Cemetery. The following day Andrew Guttenberg found an astonishing flock of **230** White-winged Crossbills. Also at the cemetery were 26 Red Crossbills, 18 House Finches, 8 Pine Siskins, and 2 Evening Grosbeaks. As Andrew said, there were "crazy numbers of finches".

Many of these northern finches have fascinating life histories, with highly evolved feeding strategies for coping with harsh conditions. Both redpolls and crossbills have a pocket or "esophageal diverticulum", for storing seeds. This extra cache for storing food helps these finches to survive the extreme cold and long winter nights, but sometime you just gotta go south.



-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

Raptor Rehab 101



It is an odd thing to become accustomed to catching injured birds of prey in the wild, to know that bald eagles and golden eagles smell so different from one another, to understand when a sick raptor needs to be tube fed a mouse smoothie, rather than offered solid food. These are not normal, everyday tasks or bits of information that the general population holds, but for the dedicated staff and volunteers at MRCC, raptor triage becomes a habit.

One of the most common questions we field from concerned

citizens who call about an injured bird of prey is, "What can I do to help the bird?" In most cases, the best course of action is to stay near the bird, until a volunteer or staff member from MRCC meets you to assess the situation. In some cases this is not always possible, especially when the bird is a six hour drive away from Bozeman. Staff will always give instructions appropriate for the situation. Keep in mind that although the raptor may be injured, they are still wild animals that can inflict serious injury, and they do not understand that we are trying to help them. Birds of prey recognize that humans are predators too!

Community members are the first step in the rehabilitation process, and the sooner the bird arrives at the raptor center, the better. Many outcomes are determined within the first day or two, and without swift treatment of certain injuries, the chances of

survival are slim. So, action is key! Refrain from feeding the raptor unless given explicit instructions, as this can cause more harm than good to birds of prey that are emaciated. The staff is more than happy to answer questions and retrieve the raptor as quickly as possible.

As indicator species, birds of prey are barometers of the health of the environment, and so we feel compelled to care for them. But it is really that sense of wonder, excitement, freedom, power and mystery of these wild, feathered creatures that we love this work.

Thank you in advance for helping!

Report an injured raptor quickly!
(406) 585-1211

*Article by Cynthia Zyzda
Photo by Becky Kean*

Mating for Life

A visual poem on sandhill cranes, mating for life and human metamorphosis.

In this intimate documentary, the filmmaker makes a pilgrimage to the central United States where the annual spring migration of the sandhill cranes occurs along the Platte River. As this journey unfolds, the author compares the crane migration to her own transformation as she turns forty. The film interweaves facts about this most elegant of birds with existential questions that tend to resonate around the midpoint of our lives. The sandhill crane is a bird species known to mate for life; it is one of the oldest living birds and, as such, might have some things to teach us about our ability, or inability, as the case with the author, to find a lifelong mate. The film features spectacular footage of these ancient birds and various landscapes of the route from Montana, the author's home, to the Platte River in central Nebraska. The theme is one of human transformation and human-animal relations; All footage is shot in HD, 16mm, super 8, and hand drawn animation. The film is a meditation on nature and art, and poses essential questions about our need for both connection and solitude.





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 10th of the month preceding the month articles will appear. Please send to: **Mary Cloud Ammons, 503 Bozeman, Bozeman MT 59715** or newsletter@sacajaweaudubon.org.

Change of Address: Please notify Sally MacDonald, 223-9167 or membership@sacajaweaudubon.org 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;
www.mtaudubon.org For direct contact: shoffman@mtaudubon.org
 Montana Bird Hotline: 406-721-9799 to report unusual or out-of-season birds

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