



Sacajawea Audubon News

Sacajawea Audubon builds on an interest in birds to promote the conservation of our natural environment through enjoyment, education, and action



Calendar at a Glance

MAY 2019

3	Give Big Day Events
8	SAS Board Mtg at the Lehrkind Mansion
10	"Epic Yellowstone: Life on the Wing" screening at the Ellen Theater
11	World Migratory Bird Day Events at the Bozeman Public Library
13	SAS Annual Members Meeting & Potluck
May 13– June 25	SAS 2019 Birdathon

JUNE 2019

7–9	Wings Across the Big Sky Bird Festival in Glasgow, MT
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STORY MILL COMMUNITY PARK WALKS

May 9, 16, 23, 30 and June 6.
Time: 8–9:30 am

INDRELAND AUDUBON WETLAND PRESERVE WALKS

May 17, 24, 31 and June 7, 14, 21, 28.
Time: 8–10 am

See page 7 for more info

Annual Sweet & Savory Potluck/Meeting

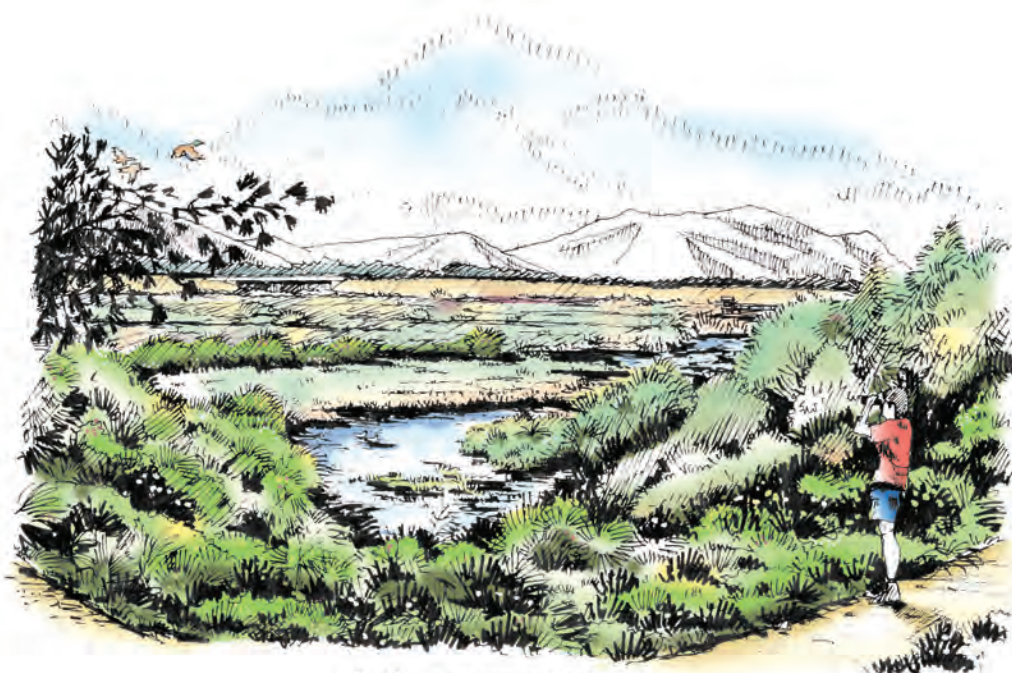
Monday, May 13th, 2019, 6 pm, Hope Lutheran Church

Please join us May 13th for our annual meeting & potluck social! This is our last program before the summer break. The potluck starts at 6 pm at Hope Lutheran Church with a short meeting, board member elections, and program following afterwards. Please bring something savory or sweet to share.

About the program:

You are not going to believe where your local chapter of Audubon is going. Join SAS and the Wetland Preservation Project Committee for a more in-depth look at plans for Sacajawea Audubon Society's new **Indreland Audubon Wetland Preserve**. Board member Billy Burton will present an incredibly informative and entertaining synopsis of wetlands and their interesting inhabitants as well as our plans for the Preserve.

Billy Burton was raised by two naturalist parents in a remote valley of central Idaho. He was allowed to run feral around the mountains and rivers near his hometown of Stanley (Idaho) making discoveries and nurturing a lifelong curiosity for all things wild. He obtained degrees in Biology, Wildlife Biology, and a Master's in Natural Resource Management. Billy has worked for several conservation agencies, including research work involving sage grouse and riparian systems in Southwest Montana. He currently divides his time between Dillon and Bozeman, keeping a finger on the ecological pulse and biodiversity in the area while also volunteering as a Sacajawea Audubon Society Board Member.



B. View across wetland



World Migratory Bird Day 2019

Sacajawea Audubon Society is co-hosting the 2nd Annual World Migratory Bird Day Festival, May 10th and 11th!

On Friday night, May 10th, at 7:00 pm, we will screen *“Epic Yellowstone: Life On The Wing”* at the Ellen Theatre. This film was made locally by Grizzly Creek Films and several Sacajawea Audubon members were involved in

the production. Following the film, there will be a panel discussion featuring the filmmakers.

On Saturday, May 11th, there will be lots of **FREE** fun and educational activities for children and their families: bird face painting, bird arts & crafts, the Great Migration Game, bird walks, and lots more! The festival runs from 10 am–1 pm at the Bozeman Public Library.

GIVEBIG

MAY 2 & 3, 2019

Get ready to give and support SAS’s education and conservation projects! Please join our fundraising campaign and help us reach our goal of \$5,000 and 100 donors! May 2nd, starting at 6:00 pm, you will have 24 hours to make your donation, ending at 6:00 pm on May 3rd. Donations can be made electronically to Sacajawea Audubon by visiting [Give Big Gallatin Valley](#) or by stopping by our donor lounge at Wild Birds Unlimited (2047 W. Oak Street) on Friday, May 3rd, from 12:00–3:00 pm. An Ambassador Raptor from Montana Raptor Center will be there from 2:00–3:00 pm.

SAS is also co-hosting a FREE Bird Walk with the Trust for Public Lands at the Story Mill Community Park on May 3rd, 8 am–9:30 am. To register for the walk, contact Anna Pappert at anna.pappert@tpl.org.

If you have any questions or would like more information, please contact Terra Knopf at terra.kopf@tpl.org.

Thank you in advance for your generosity to Sacajawea Audubon Society!



It's time to call your favorite birders and register your Birdathon team!

SACAJAWEA AUDUBON 2019 BIRDATHON

May 13–June 25, 2019

How does a Birdathon Work?

A Birdathon is similar to a walk-a-thon, but instead of collecting pledges per mile walked, you spend a great spring day outdoors with fellow birders, scanning skies, trees, shrubs, fields and water—even your backyard feeder—for birds. The challenge is to identify as many bird species as possible within a 24-hour period from Tuesday, May 13 to Tuesday, June 25, 2019. You collect pledges per bird species and the money raised benefits Southwestern Montana birds and other wildlife.

To add to the fun, by participating you could win prizes and awards. Check out the dates, rules, and award /prizes information sheets in the Birdathon Kit you can find online at sacajaweaaudubon.org or call (406) 600-6666.

How Can You Participate in the Birdathon?

Participation is easy. You don't have to be an expert; some people even do Birdathons by counting the visitors to their feeder. Others cover dozens of miles in a day, racking up over 100 species. The key to Birdathon is to have fun!

Join a Team. Contact the Birdathon Committee. We have birdathon teams that would love for you to join them. Even if you can't tell a goose from a grouse, we can teach you how. We also have celebrity birder teams.

Form a Team. Get a few of your birding friends together and schedule a 24-hour period to go birding. Contact us for a Birdathon Kit and register your team.

Take a Business "Bird Break." Trade in your briefcase for binoculars, grab co-workers, and count birds on your lunch hour! Or get your business involved by becoming an event sponsor.

Be a Backyard Birder. Gather pledges and watch birds in your neighborhood park or at your own backyard feeder. Compete for our "Sitting Duck" award.

Sponsor a Team Member. Support your favorite team or team participant by making a pledge.

Sponsor a Youth Team. Support a group of young birders as a adult birder mentors them on a 6- or 24-hour birdathon. Recommended donation for a youth team is \$50 or more.

The Birdathon Committee has maps, field guides, fundraising tips, and plenty of experience to share. Contact us at sacajaweaaudubon.org or (406) 600-6666.

2019 Birdathon Key Dates

May 13.....First Day of Birdathon
June 25.....Last Day of Birdathon
June 26.....Team Reports and Pledge Forms Due
June 27.....Birdathon Award & Celebration Party

Awards & Prizes Categories

Most Species Identified: This award recognizes the team that identifies the most species in a 24-hour period. All members of the team must see or hear 95% of the birds reported.

Most Money Raised: This award recognizes the team that raises the highest total dollar amount in donations.

Most Pledges Collected: This award recognizes the team that solicits the highest number of individual pledges.

Most Species in a Half Day: This award recognizes the team that identifies the most species in a 6-hour period.

Best Bird Award: This award recognizes the team that records the "best" bird as determined by an outside judge. This could be a rare bird for a specific habitat or a bird that is difficult to find in its habitat.

Raptor Award: This award recognizes the team that sees the most Raptors on their Birdathon Day.

Magpie Award: This award recognizes the team that sees the most Magpies on their Birdathon Day.

Important Bird Area (IBA) Sighting Award: This award recognizes the team that observes the most bird species in Montana IBAs.

Sitting Duck Award: This award is given to the team that identifies the highest number of species while staying within an imaginary circle 200 feet in diameter during their count.

Carbon Neutral Award: This award is given to the team who is the most energy efficient or has the smallest carbon footprint.

Mentor Award: Each Team Leader will be entered for a prize.

Rookie Award: If you're new to birdwatching you will be eligible for a prize at the awards celebration.

For Birdathon Kit or more information visit sacajaweaaudubon.org or contact Loreene Reid at loreener@yahoo.com or (406) 600-6666.



American Birding Association Principles of Birding Ethics

Everyone who enjoys birds and birding must always respect wildlife, its environment, and the rights of others. In any conflict of interest between birds and birders, the welfare of the birds and their environment comes first.

CODE OF BIRDING ETHICS

1. Promote the welfare of birds and their environment.

- 1a. Support the protection of important bird habitat
- 1b. To avoid stressing birds or exposing them to danger, exercise restraint and caution during observation, photography, sound recording, or filming.
 - Limit the use of recordings and other methods of attracting birds, and never use such methods in heavily birded areas, or for attracting any species that is Threatened, Endangered, or of Special Concern, or is rare in your local area.
 - Keep well back from nests and nesting colonies, roosts, display areas, and important feeding sites. In such sensitive areas, if there is a need for extended observation, filming, photography, or recording, try to use a blind or hide, and take advantage of natural cover.
 - Use artificial light sparingly for filming or photography, especially for close-ups.
- 1c. Before advertising the presence of a rare bird, evaluate the potential for disturbance to the bird, its surroundings, and other people in the area, and proceed only if access can be controlled, disturbance minimized, and permission has been obtained from private landowners. The sites of rare nesting birds should be divulged only to the proper conservation authorities.
- 1d. Stay on roads, trails, and paths where they exist; otherwise keep habitat disturbance to a minimum.

2. Respect the law, and the rights of others.

- 2a. Do not enter private property without the owner's explicit permission.
- 2b. Follow all laws, rules, and regulations governing use of roads and public areas, both at home and abroad.
- 2c. Practice common courtesy in contacts with other people. Your exemplary behavior will generate goodwill with birders and non-birders alike.

3. Ensure that feeders, nest structures, and other artificial bird environments are safe.

- 3a. Keep dispensers, water, and food clean and free of decay or disease. It is important to feed birds continually during harsh weather.
- 3b. Maintain and clean nest structures regularly.
- 3c. If you are attracting birds to an area, ensure that birds are not exposed to predation from cats and other domestic animals, or to dangers posed by artificial hazards.

4. Group birding, whether organized or impromptu, requires special care. Each individual in the group, in addition to the obligations spelled out in Items #1 and #2, has responsibilities as a Group Member.

- 4a. Respect the interests, rights, and skills of fellow birders, as well as people participating in other legitimate outdoor activities. Freely share your knowledge and experience, except where code 1(c) applies. Be especially helpful to beginning birders.
- 4b. If you witness unethical birding behavior, assess the situation, and intervene if you think it prudent. When interceding, inform the person(s) of the inappropriate action, and attempt, within reason, to have it stopped. If the behavior continues, document it, and notify appropriate individuals or organizations.

Group Leader Responsibilities [amateur and professional trips and tours]:

- 4c. Be an exemplary ethical role model for the group. Teach through word and example.
- 4d. Keep groups to a size that limits impact on the environment, and that does not interfere with others in the same area.
- 4e. Ensure that everyone in the group knows of and practices this code.

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WEEKLY BIRD WALKS



Wetlands Bird Walks at the Indreland Audubon Wetlands Preserve

Curious about the exciting wetlands preserve that Sacajawea Audubon is acquiring and restoring? Eager to see some great birds without leaving the city? Join Sacajawea Audubon guides for Friday morning bird walks

Dates: May 17, 24, 31 and June 7, 14, 21, and 28

Time: 8:00–10:00 am

Meet at Café M (777 E. Main St.) for a brief talk about the wetlands and our vision for its future. We will then take a short walk to the preserve so bring your binocs and your enthusiasm for birds and wetlands while we explore this special area. All birding abilities welcome and no registration needed.

Contact Paulette Epple at conservation@sacajaweaaudubon.org for more information.

CALLING ALL BIRD LOVERS! Join us for the Story Mill Community Park Bird Walks!

This spring, Sacajawea Audubon Society and The Trust for Public Land will be offering free guided bird walks at the Story Mill Community Park. Come and explore the nature sanctuary within the park, view the award winning wetlands restoration, and enjoy the many bird species that call the Story Mill area their home.

Date: Thursdays, May 9, 16, 23, 30 and June 6

Time: 8–9:30 am

We will **meet at the Story Mill Spur Trailhead** on Story Mill Road, south of the Mill Elevator. Bring your binoculars, your eyes, and your ears for a unique birding experience. Space is limited so sign up soon! Please contact Terra to reserve your spot: terra.kopf@tpl.org or call (406) 582-6245.



MONTANA SPRING 2019 BIRDING TOURS

SW MONTANA SAGE-GROUSE "LEK" TOUR

May 3–5, 2019 (3-day, 2-night)

This Southwest Montana bird watching tour of sagebrush-steppe, grassland and wetland habitats in the Dillon area will be great fun for birders of all skill levels. This 2.5-day, 2-night guided trip will start before dawn in Grasshopper Valley to witness displaying male Greater Sage-Grouse at one of the largest breeding leks in Beaverhead County, near Bannack State Park. We will also be searching for other shrub-steppe songbirds (Sage & Brewer's sparrows, Gray Flycatcher, Sage Thrasher, Vesper Sparrow, Loggerhead Shrike, etc.). Participants will also enjoy birding the alfalfa fields and grazing lands north of Dillon, with spectacular views of Bald & Golden eagles, Prairie Falcon, Ferruginous Hawk (nesting), Long-billed Curlew, McCown's Longspur, Say's Phoebe, and possibly Burrowing Owl. The trip will take you into the Pioneer Mountains along Birch Creek in search of various forest birds, including woodpeckers, jays, raptors and passerines. The wetlands and shorelines of Clark Canyon Reservoir will provide good views of a great many waterbirds, including various ducks, loons, grebes, pelicans and shorebirds. In addition to the birding we will explore the historic Bannack ghost town, which was a booming mining town beginning in the early 1860s. Your 2-night stay will be at a beautiful lodge west of Dillon with spectacular views of the Pioneer Mountains and the Grasshopper Valley.

\$495/person (Non SAS members \$545)

Guide: Billy Burton. Billy has guided trips in Alaska and Montana. Raised in central Idaho by parents that were Naturalist, he strives to spend every free minute in the pursuit of things wild. As a Wildlife Biologist, he has worked with many wildlife conservation agencies and organizations, including research work on sage grouse in Southwest Montana. He holds a degree in Biology, Wildlife Biology, and a Master's degree in Natural Resource Management.



Bob Wick, Bureau of Land Management

RED ROCK LAKES NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE

May 24–27, 2019 (4-day, 3-night)

Red Rock Lakes National Wildlife Refuge is located in the incredibly scenic and isolated Centennial Valley of southwestern Montana, about 50 miles west of Yellowstone National Park. This 4-day, 3-night tour will take you into a vast array of habitat, ranging from high elevation wetland and prairie habitat at 6,600 feet, to the mountain forests of the Centennial Mountains (which ascend to over 10,000 feet above sea level). It is this diverse, wetland-prairie-sagebrush-montane environment that gives Red Rock Lakes its unique character. Nesting birds are abundant throughout Red Rock Lakes National Wildlife Refuge at this time of year, with 120+ species possible. Red Rock Lakes is best known for being the primary location for heroic efforts in the 1930s to save the Trumpeter Swan from extinction. In addition to the majestic swan, there are another 230 bird species within the refuge, including: Long-billed Curlew, Sandhill Crane, Red-necked Grebe, Black-crowned Night-Heron, American White Pelican, Sora, White-faced Ibis, American Avocet, Willet, Northern Harrier, Bald & Golden eagles, Swainson's & Ferruginous hawks, Prairie Falcon, Short-eared Owl, Sage Thrasher and various ducks, flycatchers, kinglets, warblers, vireos, tanagers, thrushes, woodpeckers and, if we're lucky, Greater Sage-Grouse! Your 3-night stay will be at a resort that borders Red Rock Lake Refuge and Elk Lake. This perfect location for this birding tour provides comfortable individual cabins and country-gourmet cooking.

\$975/person (Non SAS members \$1,025)

Guide: Steve Hoffman with Merlin Bird and Nature Tours. Over the past 15 years, Steve has led many Audubon birding tours to Belize, Costa Rica, Mexico's Copper Canyon, Veracruz, Oaxaca & Baja California regions, and throughout Montana. Steve has devoted his entire 38-year career to wildlife conservation, first as an Endangered Species Biologist; he later founded HawkWatch International and served as Executive Director for a number of conservation organizations. He received his Master's Degree in Wildlife Ecology from Utah State University. Sacajawea Audubon Society is proud to have Steve as an active member as Bozeman is his home base.

Tours include travel from Bozeman, lodging (additional charges for a single room), most meals and guide. For a full description of the tours and registration form, visit the Sacajawea Audubon website (sacajaweaaudubon.org).

Questions? Do not hesitate to contact Loreene Reid at loreener@sacajaweaaudubon.org or (406) 600-6666.

2019 Sacajawea Audubon Spring Birding Series

Participants in all trips will meet at the front parking lot of the **Museum of the Rockies** at 6:45 AM and depart at 7:00 AM **unless otherwise noted**. Car pools will be arranged at the museum; an offer to help with gas to the person driving is always appreciated but not mandatory. Dress for the weather; good footwear is a must as field trip conditions are not always dry. Bring any food or beverages that you will need during the course of the trips, and some of the longer trips might require that you pack a lunch. Turn off your cell phones and keep unnecessary conversations to a minimum. Some field trips are limited to a certain number of participants. **Contact the trip leader for more details about any trip and to sign up for the trip.** We encourage all skill levels of birders to participate. Come have a good time and learn something new.

Sat. May 11: *Old Town Road and Milligan Canyon*

Leader: Tom Forwood (406) 570-6432
tjfishing75@gmail.com (email preferred)

(1/2 day trip; mostly driving with light walking on roads) This trip begins along the cottonwood bottomlands of the Jefferson River, and then abruptly moves into dry greasewood/sage scrubland habitat. Birds along this section will range from Dusky Flycatchers and Bullock's Orioles to Sage Thrashers and Brewer's Sparrows. The route then cuts through the arid limestone cliffs of Milligan Canyon. Canyon Wrens, Rock Wrens, and Spotted Towhees frequent this dry landscape. Golden Eagles and Pinyon Jays are also a possibility along this portion of the trip. **15 person limit.**



White-crowned Sparrow by Lou Ann Harris

Sat. May 18: *Sweet Grass County Prairie Bird Tour*

Leader: Beth Madden (406) 224-1012
bethmadden64@gmail.com

(The 5-6 hour driving tour should wrap up by early-mid afternoon) Celebrate spring migration on the prairies! We will follow an approximately 40-mile driving route through prairie and agricultural landscapes north of Big Timber. Past trips have yielded curlews, cranes, raptors, and prairie songbirds from bobolinks to longspurs. Stops at wetlands will feature water birds. **16 person limit. Meet in Big Timber (Big Timber is 63 miles east of Bozeman on Interstate 90) at the Town Pump located at I-90 Exit 367 at 8:00 AM for carpooling.**

Sun. May 19: *Triple Tree Trail*

Leader: Lou Ann Harris (406) 600-3585
montlou311@gmail.com

(5 hour trip; moderately strenuous climbing 500 ft, 4 miles) As this trail climbs the hillside it passes through a number of habitats and transitional edges between them. At the bottom of the mountain, grassland quickly gives way to brushy deciduous habitat as the trail crosses Limestone Creek, where Ruffed Grouse, Calliope Hummingbirds, and Lazuli Buntings are some of the birds to expect. The trail then ascends through Douglas fir and lodgepole pine forests with a wide variety of nesting birds, including Cassin's Vireo, Swainson's Thrush, and Western Tanager. This trip features perhaps the greatest diversity of any short hike in the Gallatin Valley. **12 person limit.**

Sat. May 25: *Trail Creek Road*

Leader: John Parker (406) 586-5863
conundrumjp@gmail.com

(Until early afternoon; easy walking on forest trails and road) This 20-mile route is a beautiful drive across the north end of the Gallatin Range to Paradise Valley that passes through many diverse habitats including higher elevation coniferous forests, juniper/sage lands, and riparian areas. Western Tanager, Swainson's Thrush, Golden Eagle, Spotted Towhee, Willow Flycatcher, and Calliope Hummingbird are just a few of the species we should see. **12 person limit.**



Sun. May 26: Shields Valley Driving Tour

Leader: Forrest Rowland (814) 573-1391
rowbird2005@gmail.com

(Options for half to full day) Visit Shields Valley's birding hot spots. Weather depending, we will have the opportunity to visit an array of habitats from dense riparian, lush agricultural, shortgrass prairie, and sage flats at lower elevations, up through mixed Douglas Fir and pine forests. We will also spend plenty of time birding Cottonwood Reservoir, Castle Mountain Road Marsh, and Elk Creek Road Pond, which will surely be loaded with waterfowl and shorebirds at this peak time of year. **Meet at the Clyde Park Post Office parking lot, at 7:30 AM for carpooling.**

Sat. June 1: East Gallatin Rec. Area

Leader: Andrew Guttenberg (406) 451-5427
afgutte@hotmail.com

(4-5 hours; easy walking; 2 miles max.)

There are many possibilities with this local area. Over 180 bird species have been seen in the recreation area. This will be near the peak of migration, so we hope for some surprises. With a pond, riparian habitat, limited grassland, and mature cottonwoods we hope to see good diversity of what Gallatin Valley has to offer. Species may include flycatchers, Warbling Vireo, Gray Catbird, several warblers, Lazuli Bunting, and Black Headed Grosbeak. **12 person limit.**

Sun. June 2: Headwaters State Park

Leader: Dave Story (206) 718-5940
story.david.m@gmail.com

(1/2 day trip; easy walking, approx. 3 miles total) The Headwaters area includes a variety of habitats, including sage/grassland and riparian, so anything from waterfowl to sparrows can occur. The unique limestone cliffs support several cliff nesting species such as Peregrine Falcons and White-throated Swifts. The park, situated along the Missouri River corridor, is an ideal location to observe spring migrants. **15 person limit. Meet in the NE corner of the Target parking lot at 6:45 AM and depart at 7:00 AM for carpooling.**

Sat. June 8: Mount Ellis

Leader: Don Profota (406) 579-3200
dprofota@gmail.com

(4-5-hour trip; moderately strenuous walking) This slow-paced hike of approximately 3 miles will explore a number of habitats on State and Forest Service lands, including grassland, aspen meadow, and conifer forest edge. At this time of year many of the nesting birds, such as Calliope Hummingbirds, Red-naped Sapsuckers, Dusky Flycatchers, Orange-crowned Warblers, and a wide variety of sparrows will have arrived on their territories. Along with terrific views of the Gallatin Valley, the wildflowers on this walk will likely distract you from the diversity of birds. **12 person limit.**

Sat. June 15: Limestone Creek Canyon

Leader: Martha Collins (406) 579-0506
marthacoll@msn.com

(1/2 day trip walking on a small trail, with some rough and steep terrain for 4 miles) Limestone Creek is the least disturbed drainage in the Gallatin foothills south of Bozeman. This lightly used area is a refuge for a wide variety of wildlife that requires deep forests for cover, including some old growth spruce/fir. Some of the birds to expect on this trip include Cassin's Vireo, Golden-crowned Kinglet, Swainson's Thrush, and MacGillivray's Warbler. **10 person limit.**

Sat. June 22: Mission Creek

Leader: Robin Wolcott (406) 581-5418
pajaros@wewolcotts.com (email preferred)

(Until mid-late afternoon; mostly driving with light walking on roads) In the rolling prairie just east of Livingston we will seek McCown's Longspur and Long-billed Curlew. Along Little Mission Creek we will watch for riparian species, then search for residents of the spruce/fir forest. On our return along Mission Creek we could find a Cordilleran Flycatcher or a Golden Eagle. Over 130 species have been seen along this route including Sprague's Pipit, Upland Sandpiper, and Green-tailed Towhee. Spectacular views, abundant wild

flowers, and wildlife make the trip through the northern foothills of the Absaroka Mountains a trip to remember. After leaving Bozeman, we will reconvene at **Albertson's parking lot in Livingston at 7:30 AM and then leave from there at 7:45 AM.** Carpooling is essential. **14 person limit.**

Sun. June 23: Rocky Mountain Road Bluebird Trail

Leaders: Janne Hayward (406) 587-6124
jannehayward@gmail.com and
Lou Ann Harris (406) 600-3585
montlou311@gmail.com

(1/2 day) Get up close and personal with Mountain Bluebirds. Join Janne Hayward and Lou Ann Harris as they check bluebird nest boxes and band adults and nestlings along Rocky Mountain Road. This is a rare opportunity to get an inside look at the lives of these amazing birds, including nest building, egg laying, and raising young. Participants will **meet at 8:30 AM, at the north end of the Target parking lot.** Due to the sensitive nature of the work, this field trip is **limited to 8 participants.**

Sat. June 29: Sixteen Mile Creek

Leader: Tom Forwood (406) 570-6432
tjfishing75@gmail.com (email preferred)

Come see one of Gallatin County's hidden birding gems. Tucked away at the north end of the county is Sixteen Mile Creek. This remote drainage offers serene beauty and some fantastic bird life. Large numbers of Veerys, Lazuli Buntings, Spotted Towhees, and even some Yellow-breasted Chats make the creek bottom their home. The trip will travel up to the Middle Fork Canyon where many Cordilleran Flycatchers call home and other mountain habitat species reside as well. The return trip usually figures extensive Common Nighthawk activity. This trip requires a bit of dirt road driving, though they are generally in good shape by this time. **We will meet at the NE corner of the Belgrade Albertson's parking lot at 4:00 PM and will be returning after dark, so plan to pack a to go meal or have an early dinner. Round-trip time will likely be 5+ hours. 15 person limit.**



2019 SACAJAWEA AUDUBON BIRDING WORKSHOPS

Birds inspire curiosity and a sense of wonder. Ever wonder who exactly is whistling “Hey Sweetie!” outside your window in the wee hours of the morning? Or how to identify a bird based on a flash of yellow feathers? Or what the little brown bird in the woodpile is called? Or why she’s there in the first place? To help you answer all of these questions and more, Sacajawea Audubon Society is offering a **Beginning Birding Workshop** and **Intermediate Birding Short Courses**.

All courses will be taught by **Ashley Martens**, an experienced birder, naturalist, and outdoor educator. Ashley’s approach to teaching birding engages all of your senses to tune in to what you see, hear, and love about the wild birds around us. Contact Ashley at ashmartens@yahoo.com or [\(208\) 883-4998](tel:2088834998) for more information and to register for all classes detailed below.

BEGINNING BIRDING IN FOREST AND FIELD WORKSHOP

Participants will be introduced to the basics of birding through 3 evening classroom sessions and 3 field trips to a variety of habitats in the valley. We will cover bird families, common birds in our region, and what to look and listen for when seeking out the identity of a bird. There will be 2 sections of this course this year. Section A will have field trips on Friday mornings. Section B will have field trips on Saturday mornings. Sections A and B will meet together classroom sessions.

Classroom Sessions

Sections A & B: Thursday evenings, May 2, May 16, & June 6; 6:30–8 pm, Hope Lutheran Church

Field Trips

Section A: Friday mornings, May 3, May 17, & June 7, 7–10 am, various locations. **Section B:** Saturday mornings, May 4, May 18, & June 8; 7–10 am, various locations.

Cost: \$95 for Sacajawea Audubon members; \$115 for non-members. Please make checks payable to “Sacajawea Audubon Society” and mail to Ashley Martens at 42 Hitching Post Rd., Bozeman, MT 59715.

Max. 8 students per section. Supply lists provided upon registration.

INTERMEDIATE BIRDING SHORT COURSES

These are the perfect classes for birders who want to boost their birding skills up a notch and start studying more details of plumage, bird behaviors, and more sight and sound identification tips for specific bird families or groups. Choose as many courses as you like!

CAVITY NESTERS

Together we’ll explore the ecology of birds in our region who either excavate their own cavities (like woodpeckers and nuthatches) or nest in existing cavities (like bluebirds, chickadees, and some owls). We’ll also hone in on how to identify woodpeckers by calls, drums, and more. This trip happens early because most of these species breed early (and there are not so many leaves out so we can spot them easily)!

Classroom Session: Thursday, April 25th, 6:30–8 pm;

Field Trip: Saturday, April 27nd, 7–10 am

BIRD LANGUAGE

Birds are the true messengers of the forests. They can tell us if there’s a fox hiding in the brush, a person about to run down the trail, or a sharp-shinned hawk or owl about to fly through. Come learn the ancient art of bird language. We’ll learn the 5 voices of the bird and some alarm patterns in class. We’ll practice identifying these voices and patterns in the field and conduct a “bird sit” together. Awareness of bird language also inevitably leads to a deeper awareness of self.

Classroom Session: Thursday, May 9th, 6:30–8 pm;

Field Trip: Sunday, May 12th, 7–10 am

SPARROWS & ALLIES

Those little brown birds can be difficult to tease apart. We’ll hone in on plumage, habitat, and songs and calls clues for the sparrows of our region so that we can begin to appreciate their subtle beauty and differences.

Classroom Session: Thursday, May 23rd, 6:30–8 pm;

Field Trip: Friday, May 24th, 7–10 am

WARBLERS

What is better than yellow feathers?! Well, maybe orange ones! We’ll learn to identify differences between these wonderfully little flashy, fidgety birds and sort them out with plumage, song/call, and habitat clues.

Classroom Session: Thursday, June 13th, 6:30–8 pm;

Field Trip: Saturday, June 15th, 7–10 am

THRUSHES & OTHER SONGSTERS: BIRDING BY EAR

The songs of the thrushes are some of the most magical sounds of summer. We’ll learn to identify these birds by sight and song, as well as the many other lovely songsters in our region. This class will focus more on birding by ear than by sight, but of course we will take some time to explore and enjoy visual identification as well. Other bird families we will be sure to include are: vireos, flycatchers, grosbeaks, and the western tanager.

Classroom Session: Thursday, June 20th, 6:30–8 pm;

Field Trip: Saturday, June 22nd, 7–10 am

Cost per short course: \$45 for Sacajawea Audubon members; \$55 for non-members. Please make checks payable to “Sacajawea Audubon Society” and mail to Ashley Martens at 42 Hitching Post Rd., Bozeman, MT 59715.

Max. 8 students. Supply lists provided upon registration.





APRIL BIRD NOTES

by John Parker

To say that this spring got off to a slow start is a bit of an understatement. The larger lakes in our area remained mostly frozen for two to three weeks later than average. With very little open water to settle on, the earlier migrating waterfowl were forced to use snow melt puddles on agricultural fields for foraging. This situation created some exceptional viewing opportunities in the Ennis area, with thousands of geese, swans, and ducks visible at close range.

When not out in the fields feeding, the waterfowl could be found on the lake ice, and on March 30th Andrew Guttenberg and Tom Forwood caught the peak of the swan migration when they saw 2,200 **Tundra Swans** on the ice at Ennis Lake. A week later at Ennis Lake, the participants on the Sacajawea Audubon field trip were treated to the magnificent sight of nearly 300 **American White Pelicans** descending onto the lake as they arrived from the south.

A **Black-backed Woodpecker** was discovered by Ben Goodhart March 30th up Deep Creek on the east side of Paradise Valley. This woodpecker was within the perimeter of the 2012 Pine Creek Fire. Typically, Black-backed Woodpeckers are only expected to be found in burns the first three to five years post fire.

Most of the flycatchers that breed in southwestern Montana arrive during the second half of May. The exception

is **Say's Phoebe**, which generally start arriving in this area early in April. On March 29th Jeff Culler and Joe Hanfman spotted this spring's first Say's Phoebe at the south end of Paradise Valley.

So far this spring most birds have been arriving about when they should. One modest exception was the flurry of towhee sightings the end of March. Joan Ryshavy first saw a **Spotted Towhee** in her yard west of Belgrade on March 28th. The following day Howard Weinberg had a **Green-tailed Towhee** in his Gardiner yard. Then on the 30th Matt Keefer discovered another **Spotted Towhee** along the Brackett Creek Road west of Clyde Park.

While driving the road to Big Sky April 12th, Brad Barth saw a **Cattle Egret** on the golf course. This Old World species, which first arrived in the New World in the late 1800s, was first seen in Montana in 1977, and is still a rare sight anywhere in the state. Interestingly, this is only the second spring record for southwestern Montana.

Spring is a time to get reacquainted with the birds we've been longing for through the winter, and now every day brings new possibilities whether common or exotic.

Green-tailed Towhee by Lou Ann Harris





Plants for Birds: Serviceberry (Saskatoon, Juneberry, Shadbush)

- **Scientific Name:** *Amelanchier alnifolia*
- **Height:** 4-25 feet | **Hardiness:** Zone 2-4 depending on cultivar
- **Wildlife value:** Berries are highly desirable food for birds and other wildlife. Also provides cover and nesting sites

Serviceberry is a native shrub/tree of the western United States and all of Canada. It's a plant species that tops the list for attracting a wide variety of birds with its abundant small purple berries. Whole flocks of birds will converge in these trees, chirping and chattering as they feed on the berries. Over 40 species of birds have been seen feasting on the fruit including waxwings, warblers, woodpeckers, thrushes, grosbeaks, finches, chickadees, and grouse.

Amelanchier is a great addition to any type of garden adding a variety of color in spring and fall as well as producing fruit in the summer. For landscaping they are often used in borders, backdrops, or screens. Serviceberry blooms early with fragrant masses of snowy white flowers that attract insects. In late June it produces dark purple berries (hence the name Juneberry) that attract birds and also provide good eating for humans. It is a very important food to Native Americans who for centuries have eaten and gathered the berries to make bread and fruit leather, flavor stews, and as an addition to other food items. It makes good jams, jellies, and pies and some people even make a wine with the sweet fruit. In the fall serviceberry leaves turn brilliant red, yellow, and orange which certainly would brighten any corner in the garden.

This beautiful deciduous native is low maintenance and quite drought tolerant. It can grow in almost any type of soil but prefers well drained, rich loamy soils and full sun. If you are growing for a large berry crop, keep the plant moist the majority of the spring through summer and add compost. Serviceberry can grow very large, up to 25 feet tall and 15 feet wide. For a smaller space consider the 'Regent' cultivar, which remains a compact 4-6 feet tall (available in nurseries locally).

As you plan the addition of serviceberry into your garden make sure to plant enough to share. Plant one for you and your family and plant one for the birds! ~ *Leslie Eddington*

Wings Across the Big Sky Bird Festival

June 7-9, 2019

Cottonwood Inn, Glasgow, MT

If you haven't registered for Montana Audubon's annual Wings Across the Big Sky Festival yet, it's time to get busy! Slots remain on great field trips to the stunning prairie landscapes in Montana's northeastern region. The area supports numerous uncommon grassland bird species such as Sprague's Pipit, Chestnut-collared and McCown's Longspur, and Mountain Plover among others.

Featured speakers include American Prairie Reserve founder and Great Falls native Sean Gerrity, who will discuss the importance of Montana's undisturbed, native prairies for birds and other wildlife in the Reserve region. Andy Boyce with the Smithsonian Conservation Biology Institute will present on the effects of livestock grazing on grassland birds. Other presenters include Kelsey Molloy with the Nature Conservancy, who will give an overview of that organization's work in the area, and Conservation Program Manager Amy Seaman will describe the unique avifauna of local grasslands and some of the citizen science work of Montana Audubon. Executive Director Larry Berrin will round out the festival speaker lineup with a Saturday evening presentation entitled, "State of the Birds."

To learn more about the 20th annual Wings Across the Big Sky Bird Festival and to register, please visit: mtaudubon.org or call (406) 443-3949.

We hope to see you there!



Beware of Hazards to Birds!

Spring is here, the grass is greening, and advertisements appear enticing us to buy chemicals and products to make our gardening easier and pest free. But many of the products being marketed for use around our homes and lawns can be very damaging to the environment. Some may especially have dire consequences for the birds we love to invite to our yards.

Take for example a recent advertisement promoting the use of Ortho Home Defense Insect Killer for Lawns, stating: “Most people don’t notice a bug problem until it enters the house. However, experts agree that the most effective way to keep bugs from becoming an indoor problem is to get them while they’re still outdoors. With Ortho Home Defense Insect Killer for Lawns granules, you can kill bugs outside before they move in. The 25 pound bag will treat up to 25,000 square feet and effectively take care of 100-plus insects, including unwanted ants, spiders, fleas, ticks, armyworms, Asian lady beetles, chinch bugs, crickets, cutworms, earwigs, grasshoppers, lawn moths and sod webworms, millipedes, mole crickets and weevils.” “Apply this proactively in the early spring or summer to prevent infestation.” (*The Costco Connection*, March 2018)



This is a frightening promotion of a product that effectively sterilizes the soil, killing all insect life! What is a bird supposed to eat? And woe to the bird that eats an insect in a lawn that has been treated!

If you’re having a problem with bugs getting into your home, consider using more environmentally friendly methods of control—look for cracks to seal up around foundations, windows, and doors; look for organic alternatives; or spray insecticide only around the edge of the foundation. There’s really no need to eradicate every insect in the yard!

Another product that can inadvertently kill birds is the Terro Spider and Insect Trap. One day I heard a raucous magpie commotion in my back yard and went to investigate. All the magpies flew off except for their one companion that was struggling on the ground, his wing, tail and feet all glued tight to one of these Terro traps. Perhaps the bird had been drawn to the bugs trapped in the sticky glue and then fell victim to the trap itself. The magpie was destined to die until I came to its rescue and freed it. Unfortunately it lost quite a few feathers in the process.

Bottom line: use lawn and home products such as these sparingly or not at all...for the sake of the birds!

~Conservation Chair, Paulette Epple

SACAJAWEA AUDUBON SOCIETY OFFICERS AND COMMITTEE CHAIRS

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Membership	Loreene Reid membership@sacajaweaaudubon.org
Hospitality	Sherry Staub hospitality@sacajaweaaudubon.org



SAVE THE DATE: Bird-Friendly Gardens Tour Monday, August 5th, 6:30 pm

Co-hosted by Sacajawea Audubon and the
Montana Native Plants Society

This exciting tour includes two in-town yards that have been designed to attract birds, pollinators, and other wildlife as well as create inviting outdoor living spaces. Join Paulette Epple from Sacajawea Audubon as we visit the gardens of Marlena Renwyk and Mary Keck. Marlena's gardens feature an entire front yard beautifully planted with native drought-tolerant plants that are also pollinator- and bird-friendly. Then we will tour Mary Keck's yard where a mature landscape of trees, bird-attracting shrubs, vines, berries, gardens, perennials, and ground covers combine to create the multi-layered, dense habitat so valuable to birds. Meet on the north side of Beall Park (E. Short Street). Info: Paulette Epple, conservation@sacajaweaudubon.org or (406) 580-6186.



Paulette Epple

Nominate a Conservation Leader for a 2019 Montana Audubon Award!

Nominations are now being accepted for Montana Audubon's 2019 awards. Consider nominating someone you know for Conservationist of the Year, Environmental Educator of the Year, Citizen Scientist of the Year, or a Lifetime Achievement award!

Nomination forms can be found on our website: mtaudubon.org/about/awards. **The deadline for nominations is May 20, 2019.** Please submit via email (*preferred*) to info@mtaudubon.org or by mail to Montana Audubon, PO Box 595, Helena, MT 59624. Award winners will be announced at our Bird Festival banquet in Glasgow on June 8th.

AWARD CATEGORIES:

- CONSERVATIONIST OF THE YEAR.** For an individual who has provided significant wildlife conservation achievement in Montana.
- ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATOR OF THE YEAR.** For a person who has shown outstanding achievement in educating others about birds, other wildlife, and conservation of habitat.
- CITIZEN SCIENTIST OF THE YEAR.** For a person contributing significantly to our knowledge and understanding of birds and their habitats through monitoring and observations.
- LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD.** For an Audubon volunteer who has dedicated extraordinary effort, time and energy to shape the activities and successes of a local Audubon Chapter and/or Montana Audubon.

SACAJAWEA AUDUBON BOOK GROUP: *New Leadership*

The Sacajawea Audubon Book Group has had a changing of the guard. Adele Pittendrigh, who has coordinated the book group for four years is stepping down. Sherry Staub, the SAS Hospitality Chair, is the new book group coordinator.

Please send questions about the book group to Sherry. Her address is scstaub@mchsi.com.





Sacajawea Audubon Society
P.O. Box 1711
Bozeman, MT 59771-1771
Change Service Requested

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

Sacajawea Audubon Society Monthly Newsletter is available electronically to all Sacajawea Audubon Society members September through May. Members and non-members can receive a mailed paper newsletter for an annual \$10 subscription fee. Please send your check to the address above.

Deadline for article submission is the 15th of the month preceding the month the articles will appear. Send articles electronically to Stephanie Nelson at: newsletter@sacajaweaaudubon.org.

Change of Address: If you have a change of address or are away, please notify membership@sacajaweaaudubon.org. Undeliverable mailed newsletters are returned to us for an extra fee.

Find more at the **Sacajawea Audubon Society website** at: sacajaweaaudubon.org

Sacajawea Audubon 2019 Field Trips *at a Glance*

May 11th

Old Town Road and
Milligan Canyon

May 18th

Sweet Grass County
Prairie Bird Tour

May 19th

Triple Tree Trail

May 25th

Trail Creek Rd

May 26th

Shields Valley
Driving Tour

June 1st

E, Gallatin Recreation Area

June 2nd

Headwaters
State Park

June 8th

Mount Ellis

June 15th

Limestone Creek
Canyon

June 22nd

Mission Creek

June 23rd

Rocky Mountain Road
Bluebird Trail

June 29th

Sixteen Mile Creek

CLASSES & FIELD TRIP

May 2nd– June 8th: Beginning Birding

May 9th & 12th: Bird Language

May 23rd & 24th: Sparrow and Allies

June 13th & 15th: Warblers

June 20th & 22nd: Thrushes and Other Songbirds

Fall Birding Classes start in September.
Watch the website for details.

BIRDING TOURS

May 3rd–5th:
SW Montana Sage Grouse Lek Tour

May 24th–27th: Red Rock Lakes Refuge Tour

SAVE THE DATE

Aug 5th: Bird Friendly Gardens Tour

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See pages 4-5 for more info on Field Trips.

Mountain Bluebird by Lou Ann Harris.