



Sacajawea Audubon News

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

Monday, May 10th, 2021 VIRTUAL PROGRAM:

“Being Beaver: The Ecology and Conservation of a Keystone Species” with Rob Rich



Photo by Andrea DiNino.

Over four centuries ago, nearly 400 million North American beavers kept our continent green and wet. Three centuries later, the Fur Trade collapsed their numbers to a mere 100,000. Today, beavers are back on the road to recovery, but they’ll need our help to endure in

landscapes humans altered in their absence. And we—along with willows, trout, toads, swans, moose, and many more plants and animals—will need their help, too.

Castor canadensis has been shaping the structure and function of our watersheds for millennia, and this keystone species can promote healthy, resilient habitat as the climate changes, now and into the future. With extensive direct observations and research affirming the significance of this wildfire-buffering, life-diversifying, water-storing rodent, this talk will explore just what it takes to be a beaver, and how the beaver’s natural history can help us to better understand, appreciate, and protect the world we share.

Rob Rich works as conservation and education associate with Swan Valley Connections, where he coordinates diverse projects advancing watershed health and teaches field ecology in the Montana Master Naturalist program. Drawing on his experience with beaver restoration throughout the Pacific Northwest, Rob also works with the National Wildlife Federation to coordinate the Montana Beaver Working Group. He sometimes writes for *Earth Island Journal*, *High Country News*, *Camas* and other publications; but he’s most at home outside, exploring each day’s natural curiosities.

Please register for SAS’s May 10th Annual Program Meeting at <https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/6604241195920107789>. After registering, you will receive a confirmation email with information about joining the webinar. Share our virtual program using hashtags [#beavers](#), [#wetlands](#), and [#IAWP](#).

*SAS programs are free and open to the public. Our programs feature a special guest speaker the 2nd Monday of each month, September through May. **Join us this month for a virtual social at 6:00 PM. Board elections are at 6:30 and the program begins at 7:00 PM.** For more information, contact Kyle Moon at programs@sacajaweaudubon.org.*



Photo by Rob Rich.

2021 Sacajawea Audubon Society Board Elections and Annual Potluck

Sacajawea Audubon Society's **53rd Annual Membership Meeting and Potluck** will be a virtual event. Plan ahead and make the dish/dishes you wish to nosh on and join us at **6:00 PM on May 10th** for the virtual grub hub.

The annual business meeting and board elections will start at **6:30 PM** with the program: *"Being Beaver: The Ecology and Conservation of a Keystone Species"* with Rob Rich beginning **7:00 PM**.



Beaver dam photo by May 10 Program Presenter Rob Rich.

This year we have five board members up for re-election:

- Board Secretary, Emma Narotzky;
- Board Treasurer, Mary Schlosser;
- At Large Board Members Billy Burton, Travis Kidd, and Forrest Rowland, all of which wish to remain on the board for another two-year term.
- One open board position also needs to be filled.

Our Nominations Committee is being Co-Chaired by former Board Member Sharon Hanton and current Board Member Aaron Clausen, who are reaching out to those who have indicated interests in being on the board or those whom have been suggested for consideration for the board by others. The Nominations Committee will present the proposed slate of renewing and new board members at the virtual May meeting for discussion and a vote by the members of SAS. SAS continues to operate as a true all volunteer grassroots organization. Your dedication and commitment to SAS is valued and appreciated!

SACAJAWEA AUDUBON SOCIETY OFFICERS AND COMMITTEE CHAIRS

Officers

President	Chris Nixon pres@sacajaweaaudubon.org
Vice President	John Edwards vicepres@sacajaweaaudubon.org
Treasurer	Mary Schlosser treas@sacajaweaaudubon.org
Secretary	Emma Narotzky sec@sacajaweaaudubon.org

Board Members

Billy Burton	billyburton@sacajaweaaudubon.org
Travis Kidd	education@sacajaweaaudubon.org
Vicki Saab	vickisaab@sacajaweaaudubon.org
Aaron Clausen	aaronclausen@sacajaweaaudubon.org
Loreene Reid	loreener@sacajaweaaudubon.org
Forrest Rowland	forrestrowland@sacajaweaaudubon.org
Boardroom Bobcat Bri Daniels	boardroombobcat@sacajaweaaudubon.org

Activity Leaders

Education Chair	Travis Kidd education@sacajaweaaudubon.org
Conservation Co-Chairs	Paulette Epple conservation@sacajaweaaudubon.org Adele Pittendrigh adelep@sacajaweaaudubon.org
Field Trips, Bird Sightings	John Parker birdsightings@sacajaweaaudubon.org
Hospitality	Sherry Staub hospitality@sacajaweaaudubon.org
Membership	Loreene Reid membership@sacajaweaaudubon.org
Newsletter	OPEN newsletter@sacajaweaaudubon.org
Programs	Kyle Moon programs@sacajaweaaudubon.org
Website	Lou Ann Harris webmaster@sacajaweaaudubon.org
Social Media	Bri Daniels boardroombobcat@sacajaweaaudubon.org
Wetlands Preservation	Loreene Reid wetlands@sacajaweaaudubon.org
Book Club	Sherry Staub/Elisabeth Swanson hospitality@sacajaweaaudubon.org
Newsletter Design	Amy Kelley Hoitsma aok@mcn.net
Newsletter Proofing	Marjorie Smith

SAS President Chris Nixon Tweets About The Past Year



SAS President Chris Nixon with Fievel at Natural Bridge State Park.

As we are enjoying the spring migration and the colors and sounds that it brings, what bird do you look most forward to seeing? For me, the prehistoric calls of the Sandhill Cranes at the Indreland Audubon Wetland Preserve (IAWP) have lightened the load of the winter months. Suffice it to say that the past 12 months was likely the most unusual and challenging year that Sacajawea Audubon Society (SAS) has maneuvered through as an organization. It may very well be the most challenging that the organization has ever faced. On one hand, the year 2020 did not “fly by” as most years might seem once we look back at them. But then again, where did the last year-and-a-half go?

Through it all we have withstood the onslaught of the COVID-19 pandemic with flying colors as an organization. Though we have suffered the loss of several loved and very active SAS members, none were lost due directly to COVID-19 to our knowledge. That in itself is remarkable when you consider the number of lives lost to COVID-19 throughout the county, state, country and world. Could this be in part that bird watching does indeed make us healthier and happier? There are numerous studies that have indicated such. We can all hope!

Restrictions and limitations on social gatherings provided us our first experiences of what it is like when birders can't flock together. It brought to the forefront how important it is to get together and to go birding. No mistake, birding alone or in small groups is also wonderful. But the importance of getting together in more significant groups to share our love of birds and each other's company has never been made more evident.

Although most of our field trips, festivals, and events had to be canceled this past year, we adjusted rapidly to the situation and held every scheduled monthly membership program and every SAS book club meeting—virtually. It was a challenge for all those behind the scenes to keep everything going. A big thank you is due to SAS Board Members Loreene Reid, Travis Kidd, and our new Program Chair, Kyle Moon, who made certain that virtual technology would allow us to gather from our individual homes. Kyle Moon, along with SAS member and Valley of Flowers Native Plant Society Chapter President Beth Madden, managed to score Doug Tallamy as speaker for our annual special December program, attended (virtually) by over 350 people. Our Book Club Host, Sherry Staub, also kept the book club meetings going virtually with the technical assistance of Elisabeth Swanson.

Thank you to our new Treasurer, Mary Schlosser, for leading our Financial Committee to a higher level of proficiency needed to manage the huge growth we've experienced in the past year.

Paulette Epple and numerous dirt-diggin' volunteers were able to install the Bird Friendly Garden at Story Mill Park this past year. We can all now begin to enjoy watching the garden grow, flourish, and provide for the birds (and people). See page 10 for upcoming events at the Story Mill Park.

A shout out to nest project leaders Lou Ann Harris, Janne Hayward, and Paulette Epple for their work collecting valuable bird science data. The Bluebird Trail is SAS's longest running bird science project. It was recently

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[Tweet from the SAS President](#) *(continued from page 3)*

recognized as the longest running database for bluebird stats by Cornell Lab of Ornithology. Our new Kestrel Nest Box study is supplying data for research revealing the steady decline in the American Kestrel population in the lower 48 states.

SAS was able to continue the 29th year of the Bridger Mountain Raptor Migration Survey even though a devastating fire halted the project for three weeks. Board member Vicki Saab authored the informative article in our December 2020 newsletter, helping us all better understand the ecology of this fire regime and the fire dependent bird species that will soon inhabit the burned area.

Even though outreach opportunities were greatly limited by COVID-19. Our Education Committee Chair Travis Kidd and Ashley Martens who teaches our birding classes saw that the education classes continued virtually with the corresponding small group field trips.

Our “Weed Warriors” led by Paulette Epple continued to knock-out burdock at the IAWP, Forest Service trail heads, and city parks.

The pandemic did set us back and force us to adjust the timeline with our largest project—the IAWP. However, enormous progress has been made through the tireless efforts of the Wetland Preservation Project Committee members: Karin Jennings, Billy Burton, Loreene Reid, Aaron Clausen, Lilly Deford, Forrest Rowland, Travis Kidd, and John Edwards. This undertaking has brought us into strong partnership relationships with Gallatin Watershed Council, Montana Aquatic Resource Services, Ducks Unlimited, Trout Unlimited, The Valley of Flowers chapter of Montana Native Plant Society, Gallatin Valley Earth Day, The Wild Ones, Gallatin Valley Land Trust, and the Kendeda Fund. The list of partnerships continues to grow. It has been a pleasure working with each of them.

Rich McEldowney with his team at Confluence Inc. are working toward the completion of the restoration and enhancement design for the IAWP. Piezometers have been installed to monitor existing groundwater levels in the wetland. SAS VP John Edwards spent a big part of his summer as SAS’s eyes and ears, monitoring the relocation of the city sewer main from the middle of the IAWP to the southern edge of the wetland to lessen the impact on the wetland.

We look forward to seeing you at the IAWP this spring and summer for one of many tours, bird walks, weed pulls, and cleanups. We encourage you to join the IAWP Busy Beaver Volunteer program. And, join us for the annual Give Big event starting at 6:00 PM on May 6 going through 6:00 PM on May 7th (see related Give Big article on page 5). To meet our groundbreaking date in late summer/early fall 2022, we need your support NOW!

By working with SAS and other local organizations, the City

of Bozeman now has the opportunity to demonstrate to other municipalities what can be done to better preserve, protect, and enhance wetlands and watersheds.

Thank you to all of our members who contacted our City and County Commissioners, encouraging them to make protecting our remaining wetlands and wetland functions a priority. There is so much to learn and understand about the value of wetlands. But, through your hard work, we are making progress towards protecting wetlands in the Gallatin Watershed. We intend that the IAWP environmental study area and future nature center will make understanding and valuing wetlands as easy as a leaf floating downstream.

Yes, the pandemic has been overwhelming. So, I try to remember to look for silver linings. For me, the silver lining to the cloud of the pandemic is that I finally married my long term partner, Dillon Potter, at the IAWP on the first full day of spring 2020—a five-person, totally outdoor, COVID-19 style ceremony. AND I finally agreed that we needed a puppy—Fievel. Both bring joy to my life!

This tragic year made me acutely aware of how fortunate I am to know those of you I have met, and how I look forward to meeting those of you who I do not yet know. As we grow together as a force for conservation, I challenge each and everyone of you to join with me in helping broaden the umbrella of SAS to a diversity of new members. After all, the Blackfeet tribes referred to the Gallatin Valley as “Ahkoto Waktai Sakum,” “Many-come-together Country.” We as lovers of the land should purpose to become a community as colorful as the birds of the air and the flowers of the fields we so admire. Let’s work together to protect the wetlands, streams, meadows, and forest that we all cherish in this “Valley of Flowers.”

DISCOVERY BIRD WALK *with VICKI SABB*

Gallatin Valley Land Trust (GVLТ) and Sacajawea Audubon Society (SAS) are jointly sponsoring a beginner **Discovery Bird Walk** on **June 5, 2021** at the **Cherry River Fishing Access**. Please go online to GVLТ’s website at GVLТ.org/events/discovery-walks. The walk will be led by research wildlife biologist with USFS and SAS Board Member Vicki Sabb.





SACAJAWEA
AUDUBON
SOCIETY

INDRELAND AUDUBON WETLAND PRESERVE UPDATE: MAY 2021

“Give Big” to SAS’s Indreland Audubon Wetland Preserve



On **May 6 and 7**, join Sacajawea Audubon Society in preserving Montana’s largest urban wetland, the **Indreland Audubon**

Wetland Preserve (IAWP). Montana’s wetland acreage has been in a severe decline for decades due to human development. This project will help to restore some of those losses.

Help with a generous donation at [Give Big](#). Together we can lead the way for Montana in protecting this important wetland that provides tremendous wildlife and water quality benefits. If not now, when?

Artwork by Emma Narotzky.

BIRD WALKS *at the* INDRELAND AUDUBON WETLAND PRESERVE

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

2021 DATES

May 7, 2021	May 21, 2021	June 18, 2021
May 14, 2021	June 4, 2021	June 25, 2021
	June 11, 2021	

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. Bring your binoculars and your enthusiasm for birds and wetlands! All are welcome. No birding experience necessary and no registration needed. For more information email wetlands@sacajaweaudubon.org.

BECOME AN IAWP BUSY BEAVER VOLUNTEER

Looking to learn new things, give back to your community, and have fun? Sacajawea Audubon Society (SAS) has partnered with Gallatin Watershed Council in building a team of volunteers who will enjoy Indreland Audubon Wetland Preserve (IAWP) while restoring this urban wetland and protecting the Gallatin Watershed. You’ll make friends, get exercise, and bask in the benefits of being in nature.

SAS is a grassroots non-profit organization that is highly dependent on our incredible crew of dedicated volunteers. Volunteering at the IAWP is a unique opportunity to get involved with your local urban wetlands! We have many different volunteer positions ranging from one-time volunteer events to long-term volunteer positions.

For more information and to SIGN UP to be a IAWP Busy Beaver Volunteer, visit Bozemanwetlands.org.

2021 Sacajawea Audubon Society 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. Contact the trip leader to reserve a spot and for more details about all trips. 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; some of the longer trips might require that you pack a lunch. Field trips are limited to a certain number of participants and vehicles. Car pools will be arranged prior to the trip or at the pre-determined meeting place. An offer to help with gas to the person driving is always appreciated but not mandatory. Please turn off your cell phones and keep unnecessary conversations to a minimum. We encourage all skill levels of birders to participate. Enjoy a good time with the birds and your fellow birders! Current Gallatin County protocols for COVID-19 will be followed. Social distancing and masks will be required where appropriate, and carpooling options will be determined by the trip leaders.

May 9 Sunday: BRIDGER FOOTHILLS

Leader: Vicki Saab 406-581-7829 victoriaannsaab@gmail.com
(1/2-day trip; easy to moderate off-trail walking)

We will spend the morning exploring the burn within last fall's Bridger Foothills Fire perimeter. This is an opportunity to visit a recent burn and learn about post-fire ecology, including birds' response and relationships to forest fires and burned landscapes. Notably, Black-backed Woodpeckers and other woodpeckers are known to rapidly return to recent burns to feast on the unique insect life resulting from this fascinating change in the ecosystem. Join us to find out what other pioneering birds and plants can be found in such a recently burned forest. 10-person limit.

May 15 Saturday: HEADWATERS STATE PARK

Leader: Dave Story 206-718-5940 story.david.m@gmail.com
(1/2-day trip; easy walking)

The Headwaters area includes a variety of habitats, including sage/grassland and riparian; anything from waterfowl to sparrows can occur. One of the unique features of the Headwaters area are the limestone cliffs, which support several cliff-nesting species such as Peregrine Falcons and White-throated Swifts. The park, which is situated along the Missouri River corridor, is an ideal location to observe early spring migrants. Those wishing to meet at the Headwaters area should contact the trip leader. 15-person limit and carpooling will be arranged where possible. Meet in the northeast corner of the Target parking lot at 6:45 AM and depart at 7:00 AM. Those wishing to meet at Headwaters area please make arrangements with the trip leader.

May 16 Sunday: MOUNT ELLIS

Leader: Don Profota 406-579-3200 dprofota@gmail.com
(4-5 hour trip; moderately strenuous walking 3 miles)

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. 8-person limit.

May 18 Tuesday: SOURDOUGH NATURE TRAIL

Leader: Tavis Kidd (989-820-0078 magpie.chatter8@gmail.com)
(3-4 hours; easy walking)

Enjoy a weekday morning stroll following Sourdough Creek during the peak of migration and early breeding season. We should see and hear a wide variety of flycatchers, thrushes, and warblers. During this time of the migration there are often some surprises! Some of the neotropical birds nesting here are Northern Waterthrush, American Redstart, and Black-headed Grosbeak. 8-person limit.

May 21 Friday: OWL PROWL

Leader: Tom Forwood 406-570-6432 tjfisher75@gmail.com

Meet at the Museum of the Rockies at 6 PM. Some of the owl species we hope to hear—and possibly see—include Northern Pygmy-Owl, Northern Saw-Whet Owl, and Great Horned Owl as well as Common Poorwill. There will be some daylight birding leading into the owling portion as well. This is an evening field trip, so please dress for cold weather. The location of the Owl Prowl will be up Trail Creek to Old Divide Road between Bozeman and the Paradise Valley. 10-person limit.

May 22 Saturday: SHIELDS VALLEY DRIVING TOUR

Leader: Forrest Rowland 814-573-1391 rowbird2005@gmail.com
(Options for half to full day)

The Shields Valley is home to some impressive diversity. When we leave Clyde Park, we will check some backroads and the riparian corridor along Highway 89 for nesting species as well as any migrants passing through. They should be out in force. We will also visit two separate marshes on the tour in search of Marsh Wren, Virginia Rail, and Sora. One of the highlights will be a visit to Cottonwood Reservoir, which can host an impressive variety of migrant shorebirds and waterfowl including displaying Western and Eared Grebes. The nearby sagebrush environs are a good chance to study Brewer's Sparrow and Sage Thrashers. Finally, we will head up the Shield River Valley drainage to explore some coniferous and montane riparian habitats to round out the experience! Meet at the Clyde Park Post Office parking lot, at 7:30 AM for car-pooling. 4 vehicle and 8-person limit.

May 23 Sunday: GLEN LAKE PARK (E. Gallatin Rec. Area)

Leader: Adele Pittendrigh 406-599-5086 adele.pittendrigh@gmail.com

(4-hour trip; easy walking at most two miles)

There are many possibilities at this local birding hotspot. Over 180 bird species have been seen in the recreation area. With a pond, riparian habitat, limited grassland, and mature cottonwoods, we hope to see good diversity of what Gallatin Valley has to offer during peak breeding season. Species may include flycatchers, Warbling Vireo, Gray Catbird, several warblers, Lazuli Bunting, and Black Headed Grosbeak. Meet 7:00 AM at the Glen Lake parking lot. 8-person limit.

May 26 Wednesday: MILLIGAN CANYON and the **HEADWATERS AREA**

Leader: Robin Wolcott pajaros@wewolcotts.com

(Until midafternoon; 2 miles of easy walking on gravel roads)

This trip begins with a walk 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. Later in the morning we will explore some of the other areas near Three Forks featuring a variety of habitats, including sage/grassland and riparian, so anything from waterfowl to sparrows are possible. For more details contact the trip leader. 4 car and 12-person limit.

May 29 Saturday: TRAIL CREEK ROAD

Leader: John Parker 406-586-5863 birdsightings@sacajaweaubon.org

(Until early afternoon; easy walking on gravel roads)

This 20-mile route along Trail Creek Road is a beautiful drive across the north end of the Gallatin Range. Stretching from Paradise Valley back to Bozeman, this route passes through many diverse habitats: riparian areas along the Yellowstone River, juniper/sage lands, and higher elevation coniferous forests. Western Tanager, Swainson's Thrush, Golden Eagle, Spotted Towhee, Willow Flycatcher, and Calliope Hummingbird are just a few of the species we should see. 4 vehicle and 12-person limit.

May 30 Sunday: 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. Meet at Museum of the Rockies at 6:45 AM 8-person limit.



Western Tanager photo by Lou Ann Harris.

June 1 Tuesday: SOURDOUGH NATURE TRAIL

Leader: Tavis Kidd 989-820-0078 magpie.chatter8@gmail.com
(3-4 hours; easy walking)

Enjoy a weekday morning stroll following Sourdough Creek during the peak of migration and early breeding season. We should see and hear a wide variety of flycatchers, thrushes, and warblers. During this time of the migration there are often some surprises! Some of the neotropical birds nesting here are Northern Waterthrush, American Redstart, and Black-headed Grosbeak. 8-person limit.

June 5 Saturday: Please contact Montana Audubon for a listing of their state-wide field trips. 406-443-3949 |

www.mtaudubon.org

June 6 Sunday: KELLY RANCH on the Gallatin River

Leader: Lou Ann Harris 406-600-3585 montlou311@gmail.com
(4-5-hour trip; easy walking on level ground)

This trip will explore the Kelly Ranch which has been placed into a conservation easement with The Montana Land Reliance, along the Gallatin River. The ranch includes wet meadow, cottonwood gallery forest, and dry juniper habitats. It will be the peak of breeding season, so you can expect a wide variety of the local breeding birds to be in full song and busy tending to their nests and young. Some of the birds that breed on the property are Sandhill Crane, Wilson's Snipe, Gray Catbird, American Redstart, and Rock Wren. Ranch owner Kathryn Kelly will join the group to discuss the history of the ranch, and the benefits and process of creating conservation easements. Participants will meet at the Kelly Ranch at 7:30 AM. 10-person limit.

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June 9: BOZEMAN FISH TECHNOLOGY CENTER and DRINKING HORSE MOUNTAIN

Leader: Steve DuBois 907-978-5784 sddubois907@gmail.com

Meet at the Drinking Horse Trail parking lot at 7:00 a.m.
(*Until late morning; moderately strenuous*)

There are several habitat types that come together in this relatively compact area, including the riparian areas along Bridger Creek and the conifer slopes of Drinking Horse Mountain. Many of the breeding birds should already be on their territories and actively singing and nesting at this date. Ruby-crowned Kinglets, Townsend's Solitaire's, Yellow-rumped Warblers, and American Dippers are expected here. Because of the unknown status of COVID at this time, social distancing and masking may be required. 8-person limit.

June 12 Saturday: SWEET GRASS COUNTY PRAIRIE BIRD TOUR

Leader: Beth Madden 406-224-1012 bethmadden64@gmail.com
(*The tour will be almost a full day with options for early departure.*)

Celebrate the prairies during the height of the breeding season! We will follow an approximately 40-mile driving route through prairie and agricultural landscapes north of Big Timber, with an optional 45-minute walk on some prairie lands. Past trips have yielded curlews, cranes, raptors, and prairie songbirds from bobolinks to longspurs. Stops at wetlands will feature water birds. 10-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.

June 13 Sunday: MOUNT ELLIS

Leader: Martha Collins 406-579-0506 marthacoll@msn.com
(*4-5-hour trip; moderately strenuous walking 3 miles*)

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. 8-person limit.

June 19 Saturday: MISSION CREEK

Leader: Robin Wolcott pajaros@wewolcotts.com
(*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. Car-pooling is essential. 4-vehicle and 14-person limit.

June 20 Sunday: CHESTNUT MOUNTAIN

Leader: Andrew Guttenberg 406-451-5427 afgutte@hotmail.com
(*1/2-day hike of moderate difficulty; 4 miles out and back*)

This trail climbs the north slopes of Chestnut Mountain from Rocky Creek to the back side of Frog Rock. A wide diversity of birds breed here including several species of woodpeckers and flycatchers including Williamson's Sapsucker and Olive-sided Flycatcher. The cool recesses harbor Swainson's Thrush and MacGillivray's Warblers. This may be the best local spot to find Ovenbirds. 8-person limit.

June 26 Saturday: 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, which includes some old-growth spruce-fir, is a refuge for a wide variety of wildlife that requires deep forests for cover. 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.

June 27 Sunday: ROCKY MOUNTAIN RD 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 bluebirders 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. The participants on this trip will meet at 8:30 AM, at the north end of the Target parking lot. Due to the sensitive nature of the work, we are limiting these field trips to 8 participants.

June 30 Wednesday: YELLOWSTONE NATIONAL PARK

Leader: John Parker 406-586-5863 birdsightings@sacajaweaudubon.org

(*Full day trip-12 hours; moderately strenuous hiking*)

Once we arrive in Mammoth, we will be hiking the 5-mile Beaver Ponds Trail. The diversity of habitats along the Beaver Ponds Trail is unmatched by any other trail of such short length in Yellowstone. The Beaver Ponds Trail features a wide variety of birdlife including grouse, woodpeckers, and many sparrows as it passes through open forests, sagelands, and skirts several small ponds. If time allows, we will cover other locations on the northern range that are close to Mammoth. Meet at the Museum of the Rockies at 6:30 AM. 7-person limit.

Bird Safe Windows:

A simple, inexpensive solution for reducing window strikes

Article and photos by Beth Madden

It is the time of year when we welcome migrating birds back to our yards, and also a time when many of us dread the sickening thud of a bird hitting one of our windows. This is not at all what we had in mind when we built our feeding stations and landscaped our yards with bird-friendly plantings! But our glass windows spell a deadly end for about a billion birds in the U.S. each year.

A group of SAS members has been hard at work sharing an inexpensive and relatively simple technique for making our home windows “bird safe.” The method involves using a paint pen to apply thin (1/16”) vertical lines four inches apart on the outside of the windows

The white paint pens are available at art supply stores including the MSU bookstore. After using a ruler to mark off 4-inch segments at the top and bottom of the window, simply use a straight edge to paint the vertical lines from top to bottom with the pen. We’ve been having good success using long strips of sheet metal, but other metal straight edges will work too. The painted lines hold up well despite weather and even gentle window washing. You can view a 1.5-minute video of the technique at [youtube.com/watch?v=UC9xQkUtQ98](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UC9xQkUtQ98)



Applying pin stripes with a paint pen and straight edge.



The reflection here shows birds an inviting forested hillside, when in reality it is a solid pane of glass.

After “pin-striping” their problem windows, SAS members Adele and Sandy Pittendrigh commented that the treatment was “an excellent solution and pleasing to the eye.” Others have used the technique with very effective results. You can really see the problem birds have with reflections in glass in the photo above. The nearby forest is so well reflected onto these windows—no wonder the birds fly into them!

So, why not give window pin-striping a try? For those needing assistance with applying this treatment, a home visit and some help getting started is available. SAS members can contact Beth Madden and Bill Klenn—they have been assisting people in getting started painting lines on their problem windows. SAS will provide paint pens and you can borrow our straight edges, and we will train you on your own windows. Request paint pens or schedule a home visit today: bethmadden64@gmail.com or 406-224-1012.

If you don’t like the look, the lines are easy to remove with a razor blade—but so far people have been very happy with the results!

This is just one of many techniques for making your windows safer for birds. But do note that continued research has shown that the window decals many of us commonly use are not effective (unless applied in a very dense 2 x 4” pattern). For more information, including a brochure outlining effective DIY and commercial options, visit: sacajaweaudubon.org/project/bird-safe-windows/.



BIRDATHON 2021

“BIRDING for the BIRDS”

**Any 24-hour period between
May 15 and June 27**

Spring is here, which means it is time to call your favorite birders and do a half or full day birdathon between Saturday, May 15 and Sunday, June 27, 2021. The goal of the Birdathon challenge is to identify as many bird species as possible within a 6-hour or 24-hour period. Are you up for the challenge?

Our goal this year to get all Sacajawea Audubon Society's members out birding and to raise \$15,000 to support our effective conservation and education projects.

Get a few of your birding friends together and spend a great spring 24-hour period or half-day outdoors scanning skies, trees, shrubs, fields, streams, ponds, reservoirs—even your backyard feeder—for the birds!!

WIN ONE OF OUR MANY AWARDS

- Most \$\$ Raised
- Rookie Award
- Sitting Duck Award
- Carbon Neutral Award
- Mentor Award
- Best Bird Award
- Most Pledges Collected
- IBA Award (most species seen in an Important Bird Area)
- Bird of Prey Award (most raptors seen)
- Bird Brain Award (most magpies seen)
- SAS Award (most flickers seen)
- Most Species Identified (Adult & Youth divisions and half-day & 24 hour periods)

To FORM a team or JOIN a team or SPONSOR a team visit sacajaweaaudubon.org/Birdathon or email birdathon@sacajaweaaudubon.org

HELP US MEET OUR GOAL!

Birding and Pledge Period: May 15th–June 27th
Birdathon Award Celebration: Thursday, July 1



BIRD-FRIENDLY GARDEN TOUR Wednesday, June 16, 6:30 PM

Experience a beautiful residential landscape designed to attract birds, pollinators, and other wildlife, as well as to provide inviting outdoor living spaces. Join hosts John and Tamie Parker for a tour of their gardens and learn about creating a truly bird-friendly landscape featuring habitat layers, a berry-filled bio-hedge, and perennial gardens with a variety of native wildflowers. Bring your binoculars to enjoy what promises to be a colorful showing of birds in and around this lovely property, including Western Tanagers and Calliope Hummingbirds. 15-person limit and registration is required. Contact Paulette Epple at 406-580-6186 or conservation@sacajaweaaudubon.org to register and get directions.

Join us for Story Mill Community Park Bird Walks!



This spring, Sacajawea Audubon Society is partnering with the City of Bozeman to offer free guided bird walks at the Story Mill Community Park. Come and explore the nature sanctuary within the park, visit the viewing blind at the bird feeding station, and enjoy the many bird species that call the Story Mill area their home.

**Thursdays—May 6, May 13, May 20,
May 27 and June 3 from 8-9:30 AM**

Pre-registration is required on the City website: bozeman.net. To register, click on **Services | Recreation Programs | Adult Programs | Bird Walks in Story Mill Park**. We will meet at the Story Mill Community Center off of Bridger Canyon Drive at 8 AM. Bring your binoculars, your eyes, and your ears for a unique birding experience.

Plants for Birds:

Rocky Mountain Maple

- **Scientific Name:** *Acer glabrum* (Aceraceae family)
- **Height:** 10 to 30 feet
- **Hardiness:** Zone 4
- **Wildlife Value:** Provides valuable cover and nesting sites for birds. Supports butterfly and moth species. Offers browse for big game species.

Rocky Mountain maple's bright green leaves turn shades of red, orange or yellow in the fall making this native shrub-like tree stand out across our natural landscape. A very desirable addition to our home landscapes, Rocky Mountain maple gives structure and beautiful fall color to the garden. It is low-maintenance, long-lived, and once established, offers wonderful habitat for birds. Grouse dine on the buds, grosbeaks eat the seeds, and a variety of insectivorous birds hunt through the branches for insects since maples support a surprisingly high number of butterfly and moth caterpillars. Most importantly, birds use this leafy deciduous tree as valuable cover and protection, as well as for nesting sites. One might find any number of birds utilizing a maple: vireos, wrens, tanagers, warblers, sparrows, finches, etc.

Acer glabrum is broadly distributed throughout the western U.S. plus Canada and Alaska. It is primarily associated with wet sites such as seepages, drainages, streambanks, and riparian areas, yet is drought-tolerant enough to also occur on upland sites, ridges, and slopes. Rocky Mountain maple is a major component in successional shrub-dominant vegetation communities but is also known as a shade-tolerant understory shrub in forests.

Rocky Mountain maple grows 10–30 feet tall, is highly adaptable, and can thrive in a range of growing conditions. It is most robust when planted in full sun but does well as a smaller understory species in partial shade. This plant prefers well drained but moister soils and will often grow in a multi-stemmed shrub form. It has a wide spreading root system with both deep and lateral roots and has a strong sprouting habit and will make numerous root crowns when disturbed. This maple can be found at local nurseries or can be established by transplanting 2-year or older stock.

Add Rocky Mountain maple to your landscaping plans this spring for stunning color this fall. You'll also be providing excellent cover and food for birds. If you have deer frequenting your yard, consider putting a protective fence around your trees until they are large enough to withstand some browsing.

~ Paulette Epple



Rocky Mountain maple photo by U.S. Forest Service Northern Region.



Rocky Mountain maple samaras photo by Walter Siegmund.





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's Monthly Newsletter is available electronically to all Sacajawea Audubon Society members September through May.

Deadline for article submission is the 15th of the month preceding the month the articles will appear. Send articles electronically to newsletter@sacajaweaudubon.org.

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

Find more at the **Sacajawea Audubon Society website** at sacajaweaudubon.org

BECOME A MEMBER OR RENEW YOUR ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP TODAY!



Sacajawea Audubon Society

Membership 2021

Individual or Family
January -December 2021

YES! I have included \$25 for my **2021 SACAJAWEA AUDUBON CALENDAR**

Basic Membership \$25

Supporting Membership \$50
(Supporting local conservation & education projects)

Thank You for Considering an Additional Donation\$_____

Bridger Raptor Study

Education Projects

Story Mill Park
Bird Feeding Station

Wetland Campaign

Conservation Projects

Wherever Needed

❖ Sacajawea Audubon Newsletter is sent by email. I would like a paper newsletter mailed to me.

❖ We do not share your information except with National Audubon, so your contact information is safe with us. Please check this box if you do not want your information shared with the National Audubon Society.

YES! I have included another \$20 to join National Audubon Society

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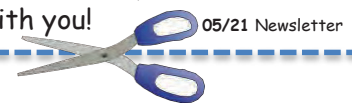
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Mail this form and your check to: Sacajawea Audubon Society
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Thank you for your membership and donation. We look forward to birding with you!



05/21 Newsletter