



Sacajawea Audubon News

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

SAS Monthly Program & Membership Meeting: Monday, October 13

MARVEL & MAGIC with Cedar Mathers-Winn, Naturalist, Biologist, and Educator Bird Song Revelations from Nature's Finest Musicians



For millennia, humans have listened with awe to the songs of birds. However, it wasn't until the 1970s that we began to understand the bizarre methods and structures that birds use to create their mesmerizing songs. Of course, there is still much left unknown, but we have learned a great deal about what is happening inside the body of a bird that allows him (or her) to produce the sounds we hear.

In this presentation, we will explore the mind-bending abilities that allow birds to produce some of the most extraordinary music in the world. We will discuss the variety of calls and songs that birds produce, as well as how these sounds are adapted to their specific uses and the lives of the birds who use them. Most of all, this talk is intended to open your ears to the fascinating depth and complexity of sounds that surround us anytime we're outside.



Cedar Mathers-Winn is a naturalist, biologist, and educator based in Bozeman, MT. Particularly obsessed with the sounds of the natural world, he has taken a long and circuitous path through a variety of jobs and ecosystems. Cedar has been a recordist on an ethnomusicology expedition in Bhutan, and an audio archivist

of music (Smithsonian Institute) and natural sound recordings (Cornell Lab of Ornithology). He started his career in biology as a chaser and observer of birds in the mountain West, the lush Northeast, the desert Southwest, the tropics of Australia, and the jungles of the Dominican Republic. He earned his Master's degree studying communication in wintering flocks of birds at the University of Montana. Cedar has always been passionate about sharing his knowledge and enthusiasm for nature. He has taught career biologists, professional guides, undergrads, and anyone else who will listen. As an educator, Cedar uses the everyday subtleties of nature to reveal worlds of wildness hidden in plain sight.

Cedar produces and provides several of SAS's educational workshops. (*see page 3 for those upcoming*). He has also directed SAS's Master Naturalist Course for the past two years.

The in-person meeting will be held Monday, October 13, 2025 at Hope Lutheran Church, 2152 West Graf (off S. 19th). A social begins at 6:30 PM; the program begins at 7:00 PM. Attendees are encouraged to bring their own reusable cups.

For virtual attendance, please register at sacajaweaaudubon.org/program. Attendees—whether in person or virtual—are encouraged to share their bird sightings at this and every monthly program.

SAS monthly programs are free and open to the public, featuring a special guest speaker the 2nd Monday of each month, September through May. For more information, contact Chris Nixon at programs@sacajaweaaudubon.org.

Psst... Our November 10 program will feature Justin Greg, as he shares his experience re-discovering the Pheasant Pigeon in Papua New Guinea.

A MESSAGE *from* SAS PRESIDENT, CHRIS NIXON



Join us on **October 4 & 5** at Bridger Bowl for the annual **Raptor Fest**. There will be fun for all ages, especially the kiddos. SAS will be back with the kids' favorite activities. Through games they can learn all about migration, bird identification, and actually build

a birdhouse for one of everyone's favorite winged jewels - bluebirds. And of course there will be opportunities to see the live ambassador birds from the Montana Raptor Rehab Center.

For our **monthly program** on **Monday, October 13th** Cedar-Mathers Winn will enlighten us about the various techniques that birds utilize to create their unique songs and calls. This could open up a whole new fascinating dimension for you when you are out birding (*page 1*). On **Wednesday, October 15th** join the **SAS Book Club** for their discussion of *Theodore Roosevelt & Bison Restoration on the Great Plains*. (*page 7*). After learning all about bison, you will have a better chance of winning at the **Tuesday, October 21, SAS Trivia Night** at Lockhorn Cider House. We will learn quiz style all about the "Ungulates of Yellowstone NP". There was a packed house for the September SAS Wildlife Trivia night which featured questions all about beavers. We expect a crowd again for the October event. I mean, everyone loves all the big furry ungulates in YNP. Can you name them all?

But wait there's more - October is jam packed with SAS events! Two are scheduled on **Saturday, October 18th**. For the larger part of that day, you have the chance to see a spectacle of waterfowl moving through the region at Ennis Lake. Check out the **Ennis Lake field trip** info on (*page 6*). Later that afternoon, slide on down to the Indreland Audubon Wetland Preserve with all the Busy Beavers (and maybe some of our real resident beavers) for the **Busy Beaver Rendezvous** (*page 4*).

Finally, finish off the month with proper Halloween flair. Join us for the **Spooky Stroll** on **October 25th** at the Indreland Audubon Wetland Preserve. Watch all the corvids come in to roost amongst the alder and willows in the wooded swamp. Warm up around the fire, enjoy hot cocoa and refreshments, and learn about this area that the corvids obviously love as much as we do.

Our SAS Board members and activity leaders look forward to meeting you or reconnecting at these events. Mark your calendars and have a month of fun with SAS!

SACAJAWEA AUDUBON SOCIETY OFFICERS AND COMMITTEE CHAIRS

Officers

President	Chris Nixon pres@sacajaweaaudubon.org
Vice President	Doug McSpadden vicepres@sacajaweaaudubon.org
Treasurer	Loreene Reid treas@sacajaweaaudubon.org
Secretary	Mikaela Howie sec@sacajaweaaudubon.org

Board Members

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John Edwards	johnedwards@sacajaweaaudubon.org
Ben Goodheart	bengoodheart@sacajaweaaudubon.org
Frank Marchak	frankm@bozemanwetlands.org
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Emma Narotzky	emmanarotzky@sacajaweaaudubon.org
Bret Davis	brettdavis@sacajaweaaudubon.org

Activity Leaders

Education Chair	Open Position
Conservation Co-Chairs	Paulette Epple conservation@sacajaweaaudubon.org Lou Ann Harris louann@sacajaweaaudubon.org
Field Trips, Bird Sightings	John Parker birdsightings@sacajaweaaudubon.org
Hospitality	Open Position
Membership	Loreene Reid membership@sacajaweaaudubon.org
Newsletter	Amy Crowder and Chris Nixon newsletter@sacajaweaaudubon.org
Programs	Open Position
Website	Lou Ann Harris & Doug McSpadden webmaster@sacajaweaaudubon.org
Social Media/ Communications	Lou Ann Harris and Mikaela Howie socialmedia@sacajaweaaudubon.org
Book Club	Elisabeth Swanson & Hilary Johnson bookclub@sacajaweaaudubon.org
Newsletter Design	Amy Crowder amy@vandycreative.com

Indreland Audubon Wetland Preserve Board Members

President	Frank Marchak, frankm@bozemanwetlands.org
Treasurer	Loreene Reid, loreener@bozemanwetlands.org
Board Members	Robin Hompish, robinh@bozemanwetlands.org Billy Burton, billyb@bozemanwetlands.org Bill Simkins, bills@bozemanwetlands.org
Stewardship Intern & Busy Beaver Coordinator	Morgan Anderson morgana@bozemanwetlands.org

INTRODUCING BRAD FRAZEE, SAS FINANCE CHAIRPERSON

Last winter, Brad Frazee and his wife Kim Kearney returned to Bozeman (his hometown) to settle for retirement. Brad built an impressive career managing environmental restoration, engineering and construction projects. He was recently appointed Chairman of the Sacajawea Audubon Society's Finance Committee. This standing committee is charged with oversight of Sacajawea Audubon Society's financial operations.

Brad's return to Montana has been a long time in coming. He departed the state in 1983 with a degree in Chemical Engineering, eventually becoming the Chief Operating Officer of the North Wind Group. With North Wind, Brad was responsible for the operation of twelve subsidiary companies involving hundreds of projects across the U.S., cleaning up cold war legacy contaminants, while building new military infrastructure. "I really enjoyed getting out to our project sites and experiencing first-hand the improvements we were making to the environment. It was very rewarding, and I was fortunate to work with so many good people. I was also able to do a little bird watching along the way and typically stashed a pair of binoculars in my bag."

Prior to settling back in Bozeman, Brad and his wife Kim were active members of the Greater Salt Lake Audubon Society. They participated in many field trips and bird counts. Hunting down new additions to their lifer lists became a real passion and the two of them hit the trails almost every weekend.

Brad recalls that he started skiing at Bridger Bowl in the first grade, a passion he passed on to his two kids. Backpacking trips throughout the Gallatin and Yellowstone



SAS Finance Chairperson, Brad Frazee (r) and Kim Kearney (l) birding near Emigrant Peak

watersheds were a yearly summer adventure for the family, instilling a love of the state's wildlife and great outdoors. He recalls how rare it was to see Bald Eagles in the 1970's along the Yellowstone River, and the impressive turnaround in their population since the ban of DDT.

With their move to Bozeman complete, joining Sacajawea Audubon Society became a top priority. "I'm certainly not an expert birder but thought I could contribute to SAS with my corporate finance and contracting background. Kim and I have a long history of volunteering for our communities and SAS really has some amazing programs and projects underway, which we look forward to supporting. And of course we are looking forward to meeting fellow birders out on the trails!"

SACAJAWEA AUDUBON SOCIETY FALL WILDLIFE WORKSHOPS

CONIFERS OF SW MONTANA

Lecture: Thursday, Oct. 9, 6:00 pm - 7:30 pm
Field: Saturday, Oct. 11, 12:30 pm - 4:30 pm
Hope Lutheran Church / Bridger Bowl

Conifers are ubiquitous in the northern Rockies, dominating most of our ecosystems. They also lead extraordinary and diverse lives, allowing them to thrive from dry plains up to treeline. But how do they do it? And why don't they drop their leaves? How old do they get? And how do you even tell them apart??? Come learn about these extraordinary plants – how they live, and how their lives influence all those around them.



We will meet for a Thursday evening lecture on conifer identification and natural history, followed by a Saturday afternoon in the field learning from the trees themselves.

COST SAS Member \$50 • Non Member \$75 • 15 Participants

WINTER TRACKING IN HYALITE CANYON

Saturday, December 6, 1:00 pm - 4:00 pm
Hyalite Canyon

Winter provides the perfect conditions not only to learn what animals have passed through our area, but also to read the story of their passing. A trail is, in a very literal sense, an animal's story written in snow. In this field class, we will spend an afternoon exploring tracks and signs in Hyalite Canyon, in the Gallatin Range. You will not only learn how to identify the writer – but more importantly, how to read.



Cost: SAS Members \$40 • Non Members \$65
15 Participants

Register for workshops:

[SAS Fall Wildlife Workshop Conifers of SW Montana](#)

[SAS Fall Wildlife Workshop Winter Tracking in Hyalite Canyon](#)



SACAJAWEA
AUDUBON
SOCIETY

INDRELAND AUDUBON WETLAND PRESERVE UPDATE: OCTOBER 2025

THE WETLAND PRESERVATION PROJECT (WPP) was initiated to accomplish Sacajawea Audubon Society's mission to protect and restore increasingly rare wetland and riparian habitats in our region, and to provide educational opportunities and enjoyment for generations to come.

INDRELAND WETLAND PRESERVE BUSY BEAVER FALL RENDEZVOUS

The end-of-season Busy Beaver Fall Rendezvous will be on **October 18th from 1:00 pm - 6:00 pm** at the Indreland Audubon Wetland Preserve. Experienced and new Busy Beavers volunteers alike are welcomed to the last big work party of the 2025 field season. We gained a lot of new Busy Beavers in 2025, so this should be a fun event and great opportunity to connect with other Busy Beavers. We will get the wetland ready for winter and then adjourn to the Kingfisher Pavilion for a Busy Beaver BBQ celebration party.

Sign up at: bozemanwetlands.org.

Our Lodge Dwelling Busy Beaver volunteers will be working through the winter on various indoor projects. Busy Beaver training and workshops will still be happening through the winter season along with **World Wetland Days on January 29 & February 1, 2026**.

Not a Busy Beaver yet?

Join the Busy Beavers Volunteer Corp and get involved in our ongoing efforts to protect and enhance this unique urban wetland. Whether you're passionate about wildlife, conservation, or community, there's a place for you at the Indreland Audubon Wetland Preserve. *For more information and to sign up, visit:* bozemanwetlands.org.



Busy Beaver volunteers install a bat box at the Indreland Audubon Wetland Preserve.

SPOOKY STROLL AT THE INDRELAND WETLAND

Enjoy spooky season vibes by watching corvids come to roost at dusk at the Indreland Audubon Wetland Preserve. An Autumn tradition the whole family can enjoy!

Join us **Saturday, October 25th from 5:00pm - 8:00pm** at the Indreland Audubon Wetland Preserve (on the historic Milwaukee Railroad berm) for a spooky celebration of our fall wildlife! Gather to watch the crows, ravens, and magpies come in to roost in the trees at the wetland, one of their favored roosting spots in the fall. We will also watch for the beavers to become active before dusk. Bring your own folding chair, binoculars, and beverage of choice or a thermos for hot cocoa. Prime corvid-viewing time will be between 5:30 and 7:30 (sunset at 6:21 pm). If you arrive with daylight to spare, visit our activity table where you can win small prizes by answering trivia questions about some of Montana's spooky animals."

MOTUS PROJECT UPDATE

Thanks to everyone that contributed to our **Motus Tower Project** helping us reach our goal! We are moving forward with purchasing equipment, meeting with landowners, and will start erecting the first tower above the Indreland Audubon Wetland Preserve this fall.



2025 BRIDGER RAPTOR MIGRATION: EARLY SEASON UPDATE!

Nearly three weeks into the fall 2025 Bridger raptor migration count season (making this the 34th consecutive full-season count atop the Bridgers), numbers for most raptor species are trending exceptionally low! We have averaged just below 3 raptors/hour (426 raptors in 143 total count hours) in the first 20 count days (August 27–September 15). Thus far, we have observed relatively windless conditions, likely resulting in a generally dispersed spatial flight pattern.

Cooper's Hawks are leading the way so far, with 103 individuals, followed by the **Sharp-shinned Hawk** (82), **American Kestrel** (66), **Red-tailed Hawk** (63), **Golden Eagle** (28), **Northern Harrier** (22), **Turkey Vulture** (17), **Bald Eagle** (11), **Swainson's Hawk** (10), **Ferruginous Hawk** (7), **Prairie Falcon** (6), **Peregrine Falcon** (4), **American Goshawk** (2), and **Merlin** (1). At this time, three species remain absent from this season's count (Osprey, Broad-winged Hawk and Rough-legged Hawk).



Ruby Neatherlin, a recent graduate of Western Washington State University, has joined our observation team for the remainder of the 2025 observation season (which ends on October 31st).

It seems the exceptionally low numbers of migrant Golden Eagles (thus far) is continuing. The US Fish & Wildlife Service is currently conducting a comprehensive long-term study to assess the most significant factors causing this long-term decline throughout western North America. We are hoping to learn much more about this remarkable west-wide population decline within the next few years.

Please join us in welcoming **Ruby Neatherlin** as our newest member of our 2025 raptor migration monitoring team. She joined team members **Izzy Masi** and **Oskar Robinson**, arriving in Bozeman (from western Washington) on September 14th. This outstanding team of observers/educators shall continue to monitor the fall migration of raptors atop the Bridgers through October 31st, the final day of our count season.



As of September 15, Cooper's Hawks (l), are leading the raptor count with 130 individuals observed. Just a single Merlin (r), has been sighted, making it the least common observation this season from the Bridger migratory route.

Raptor Viewing Tips for the Bridgers

The best overall raptor viewing for a variety of migrant raptors atop the Bridgers is from mid-September through mid-October. The general public is invited to join our team to witness and enjoy one of nature's most spectacular phenomena

as these majestic birds migrate south over the Bridgers!

Additional volunteer observers are always welcome and needed to help Sacajawea Audubon Society conduct these counts. For those in good physical condition, please note that it is a 1.5-2-hour hike to the observation point (nearly 2,000-ft. elevation gain). **Anyone wishing to volunteer** please contact Project Coordinator Steve Hoffman at swhoffman0322@gmail.com or 406-461-5714. Folks are welcome to visit hawkcount.org or sacajaweaaudubon.org to obtain daily count totals. We look forward to seeing many of you at the Bridger Lookout this season!



Early in the migratory season, the pattern of exceptionally low numbers of migrant Golden Eagles is continuing.

Project Funding

It is always a challenge to find support for our long-term Bridger raptor population monitoring efforts. The 2025 budget for this important work is \$27,000. **Contributions in any amount are greatly appreciated!** (Please send your check to: Sacajawea Audubon, P.O. Box 1711, Bozeman, MT 59771 or donate online at sacajaweaaudubon.org – THANK YOU!).

October Wildlife Trivia Night with Sacajawea Audubon Society

Trivia Theme: **Ungulates of Yellowstone
National Park**



JOIN US on Tuesday, Oct. 21st
Lockhorn Cider House—
21 S Wallace, Bozeman
5:30 PM- Social Hour | 6:30 PM
Trivia begins

Led by Captain Rudolph and friends who conduct research in Yellowstone National Park.

Test your knowledge and learn more about the larger portion of the LARGE fauna in Yellowstone. How do they each fit within the magnificent puzzle of the unique environment of Yellowstone NP? How many species are in the ungulate group of the world's first national park?



Captain Rudolph (3rd from left) and friends who conduct YNP research will lead October's trivia night.

Trivia is **FREE**, followed by a raffle. Enter to win a prize basket and benefit SAS's educational programs. **Raffle tickets are \$5 each or 5 for \$20.**

SAS Trivia Nights at Lockhorn Cider House are held on the 3rd Tuesday evening of every month in 2025!



SAS OCTOBER FIELD TRIP

ENNIS LAKE WATERFOWL

Saturday, October 18th

Meet 7:45 am at Museum of the Rockies, Carpool and depart at 8:00 am

Leader: George & Valerie Nixon • 406-219-6169 • hawkowl1526@gmail.com

This should be near the peak time for migrating waterfowl, grebes, and loons. Ennis Lake is one of the premiere staging areas for migrating waterfowl in southwestern Montana. Thousands of ducks can be spread across the lake on any given day. As is typical when high concentrations of birds are present, there should be a wide variety of waterfowl. There is the possibility of a rarity being found. Bring lunch and other essentials as we'll be out until mid to late afternoon. Also, remember to bring plenty of warm clothes as it could be cold and windy at the lake. If you have a spotting scope, please bring it for scanning the lake. For more information and to make reservations, contact George or Valerie.

Limit 12 people or 5 vehicles.

To register, email or call George & Valerie (contact info listed above).

Save the Date: December 8, 2025 Holiday Program

A Celebration of Birds in Photographs and Poem with
Uschi Carpenter, Nature & Wildlife Photographer.

Ursula "Uschi" Carpenter is a Missoula based nature and wildlife photographer whose photographs of birds have been called poignant and poetic. In her presentation, she will weave



together her images with her poetry as a tribute to our Montana birds and a call for conservation in a wounded world.

Mark Your Calendar for Upcoming Tours, Classes and Events!

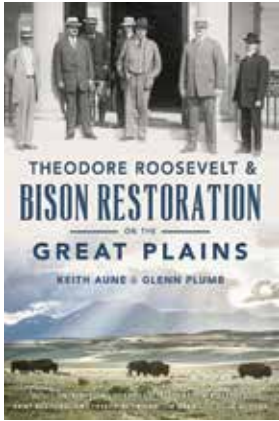
- 4-5 Oct:** Bridger Raptor Festival
- 9 & 11 Oct:** Conifers of SW Montana Workshop
- 11 Oct:** October Big Day – eBird.org Event
- 13 Oct:** Sacajawea Audubon Society Monthly Program
- 15 Oct:** Sacajawea Audubon Society Book Club
- 18 Oct:** Sacajawea Audubon Society – Ennis Lake Waterfowl Field Trip
- 18 Oct:** Busy Beaver Rendezvous – Indreland Audubon Wetland Preserve Event
- 21 Oct:** Sacajawea Audubon Society Wildlife Trivia
- 25 Oct:** Spooky Stroll – Indreland Audubon Wetland Preserve Event

- 10 Nov:** Sacajawea Audubon Society Monthly Program
- 18 Nov:** Sacajawea Audubon Society Wildlife Trivia
- 19 Nov:** Sacajawea Audubon Society Book Club

- 6 Dec:** Winter Tracking Workshop
- 8 Dec:** Sacajawea Audubon Society Special Holiday Program
- 17 Dec:** Christmas Count Season Begins

To see additional details including locations, please visit: sacajaweaaudubon.org/events

OCTOBER BOOK CLUB NEWS



As we journey into autumn, curl up with October's book selection, Theodore Roosevelt & Bison Restoration on the Great Plains. Filled with historic and recent photographs, this slim volume documents the plight of the American bison at the end of the nineteenth century, the beginnings of conservation efforts in the twentieth, and continuing efforts to protect this iconic species for the future.

The many narratives presented in the book include a Native perspective about the Blackfoot and the buffalo, historic accounts, and ecological and genetic perspectives. In other sections, we learn of women-only buffalo societies, and of the miraculous birth of Big Medicine, a white buffalo calf on the National Bison Range in western Montana in 1933.

Although saving the bison from extinction took the efforts of a multitude of people and advocacy groups over the decades, the work of Theodore Roosevelt is highlighted in the book. He

SAS BOOK CLUB SCHEDULE

We meet on 3rd Wednesdays from September-November and January-April at **Hope Lutheran Church**, Room 123 from 6:30 pm to 7:45 pm. You may also join us virtually. To join us online please notify Elisabeth Swanson (406) 570-8325, elsswa@gmail.com or Hilary Johnson (406) 599-1446, ralphhilary@gmail.com.

October 15, 2025

Theodore Roosevelt & the Bison Restoration on the Great Plains by Keith Aune & Glenn Plumb (2019)

*Our own John Mugaas will host this session with author Keith Aune

Nov 19, 2025

The Golden Spruce by John Vaillant (2005)

December 2025 - No Book Club meeting this month

is credited with "fashioning the legislative framework, the policy imperatives and the administrative processes that enabled his version of conservation to persist" (p. 133).

This book delivers not only an enjoyable reading experience, but perhaps even more importantly a blueprint of a successful, multi-faceted conservation effort that we can learn from in today's challenging world of protecting other equally precious species.

SACAJAWEA AUDUBON SOCIETY MEMBERSHIP

Individual or Family | January – December 2025

- ☐ **Basic Membership** \$25
- ☐ **Supporting Membership** \$50
(Supporting local conservation & education projects)
- ☐ **Student Membership** \$10
(College & High School Students)
- ☐ **Additional Donation \$** _____

- ☐ Bridger Raptor Study ☐ Wetland Campaign
- ☐ Story Mill Park Bird Feeding Station ☐ Wherever is Needed

Name: _____

Address: _____
(Street or PO Box)

(City) (State) (Zip)

Phone: (____) _____

Email: _____

Sacajawea Audubon Society Newsletter is sent by email.

☐ I would like a paper newsletter mailed to me.

We do not share your information except with the National Audubon Society, 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! include another \$20 to join National Audubon Society**

Mail this form and your check to: Sacajawea Audubon Society, Attn: Membership, PO Box 1711, Bozeman, MT 59771-1711

Thank you for your membership and donation. We look forward to birding with you!

October '25 Newsletter

Choose your membership level above, and thank you for considering an additional donation.

Join or Renew for 2025 by filling out the membership form above or check out the many benefits of membership and join online at <https://sacajaweaaudubon.org/join-sas/>



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 10th of the month preceding the month the articles will appear. Send articles electronically to 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

Annual Bridger Raptor Festival October 4-5 at Bridger Bowl

The **Bridger Raptor Festival**, hosted by **Bridger Bowl** and **Sacajawea Audubon Society**, is just around the corner.

Family fun activities include guided walks to the Ridge, Raptor ID presentations, Build A Nifty Nest Box and several other programs & activities. A gracious donation of 800 *Oliver the Osprey* children's books has been made by **Northwestern Energy**. It will serve as the festival's Passport to Education Prize. The author, Erin Madison, will also be present to sign copies.



The **Montana Raptor Conservation Center** will bring live raptors on both days of the festival. **Guided walks to the Bridger Ridge are a fresh event this year.** It's an opportunity to meet the official Hawk Watchers and see where the raptor count actually takes place.

The festival draws thousands of visitors every year. The true star of the migration show is the **Golden Eagle**, which shows up in droves of 1-3 thousand individuals each season. The timing of the Raptor Festival in early October is significant, as this corresponds with the peak in the Golden Eagle migratory season. Visit <https://bridgerraptorfest.com/> for a complete list of events.

