

Bitterroot AUDUBON



OCTOBER 2018

NEWSLETTER

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BOSQUE DEL APACHE NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE THROUGH THE EYES OF A BUDDING NATURALIST

By Jo Ramundo



Courtesy Paul Anders

Shortly after moving to Montana in 2014, I did volunteer work at Wild Skies Raptor center in Potomac. This was the inspiration I needed to spark my desire to learn as much as I could about wildlife in general, but in particular about the wildlife in my new home. Six months later I moved to Hamilton and quickly connected with the Bitterroot Audubon and I was “hooked!”

Excited about the wonders of the valley I decided to enroll in the Master Naturalist Program offered by the Montana Natural History Center in Missoula. This program gave me the confidence to apply as a volunteer at Bosque del Apache National Wildlife Refuge in New Mexico as an assistant ranger/naturalist. I am a student of nature and not an expert by any means, but I hope to impart some of the love I feel for this very special Refuge by presenting a talk at the Audubon meeting. The presentation will introduce you to the Bosque del Apache Wildlife Refuge, including some of the birds and animals that live there, the upcoming Crane Festival, and a bit about the volunteer experience.

Bosque del Apache National Wildlife Refuge was established in 1939 to provide to provide “a refuge

and breeding grounds for migratory and other birds” and to develop wintering grounds for Greater and Lesser Sandhill Cranes, which were then endangered. Located in southern New Mexico between the Chupadera Mountains in the west and the San Pascual Mountains in the east, “The Bosque” comprises over 55,000 acres including flood plains, wetland, irrigated farmland, arid grasslands and mountain foothills.



Courtesy Marvin De Jong

Sandhill Cranes.

Today, this Refuge, managed by U.S Fish and Wildlife, attracts 398 different bird species including thousands of wintering Cranes and geese, waterfowl, shorebirds, and birds of prey. “The Festival of the Cranes,” an annual event hosted by The Friends of Bosque, draws people from all over the world to view these spectacular birds up close and to attend a myriad of photography and educational workshops. This event is held in November, the week before Thanksgiving.

Jo will share her incredible experiences as a volunteer assistant ranger/naturalist when she had the opportunity to work and live there for four months last year. She says that she “arrived when the cranes arrived and left when they left!”



Courtesy Bill Kirms

Sandhill Cranes at sunset.

Bitterroot Audubon invites you to come and learn about this special Refuge Monday October 15th, 7:00 P.M. in the Slack Barn at the TELLER WILDLIFE REFUGE. The Teller is located just off of the Eastside Highway, north of Corvallis. Turn west onto Quast Lane and then left onto Chaffin/Creamery Lane. The public is invited. Contact Kay at 360-8664 for further information.

Letter from the President

By Becky Peters, BAS President

As I write this it is a beautiful autumn afternoon with sunshine and colors making the day truly glorious. We are so lucky to live in a valley with views that give our eyes and hearts such pleasure. And as Bitterroot Auduboners we want to keep it that way, and to keep our state that way, and our nation and our world that way. So how do we counteract what is happening to our environment when so many in power are working to undermine the steps we have taken in the past to ensure clean air and water and soil?



Our space ship is vulnerable right now and faces many problems: (<https://www.conserve-energy-future.com/15-current-environmental-problems.php>)

Pollution, global warming, overpopulation, depletion of natural resources, waste disposal, climate change, biodiversity loss, deforestation, acidification of the ocean, depletion of the ozone layer, acid rain, water pollution, urban sprawl, effects on public health (esp. dirty water), genetic engineering of our crops. What a list!

Yikes! Depressing! But I'm going to keep battling those in Washington DC who could care less about our planet. Our grandkids are more important than

those rich, greedy resource suckers. So what can we do? Here are some ideas from

<https://inhabitat.com/top-6-environmental-issues-for-earth-day-and-what-you-can-do-to-solve-them>

These are on the quick and simple side: drive less; stop using unrecycled paper towels, start using recycled paper towels or cloth towels; don't use palm oil; plant native trees and bushes; buy products with USDA Organic or Fair Trade Certified or Green Seal; reuse and recycle and compost; use green pesticides, herbicides and fertilizers.

And here are some great sites to look into: Eartheasy.com; Sustainable Table; Seventh Generation cleaning products; Rainforest Alliance. I know there are more. Next month I will gather the harder steps we need to take to counter those 15 environmental problems.

Locally, Montana Audubon is working hard to counter Interior Secretary Zinke's challenge to the Sage Grouse listing. Amy Seaman of MT Audubon is gearing up to keep us updated on the Legislative session ahead. Check out

<https://www.yeson186.org/>. She is also compiling information about our Black Swifts and Long-billed Curlews while she is out there counting the migrating raptors flying through our state. Lucky gal! Lucky us!

Get your 2019 Bitterroot Audubon Calendar!

By Becky Peters



Nationally famous local photographers have taken glorious pictures of our nationally famous local birds in our nationally famous local Bitterroot Valley. Each year this calendar is beyond words! Proceeds go to our education, conservation and scholarship funds.

You can pick one up for \$15 at the Bitterroot Audubon meetings, at the Hamilton Farmer's Market, Stevensville Farmer's Market or at these fine Bitterroot establishments:

Hamilton: Bitterroot Drug, Art Focus, Hamilton Gifts, Robbins' Hallmark, Wild About Pets, and Noah's Ark in Victor. Stevensville: Valley Drug and Variety, Ace Hardware, Florence: Ace Hardware

Sponsors of this year's calendar include: Allegra, Stevensville Country Store, SBS Solar, Earth and Wood, Ford's Department Store, Bitterroot Drug, Rod's Auto and Align, Sears, Friends of Lee Metcalf, Empire Landscaping, Ace Hardware Florence, Ace Hardware Stevensville, and Bitterroot Nursery.

Field Trip Report: Lewis and Clark Discovery Expedition with Ted Hall

By Ginny Deck



Courtesy Ginny Deck

We had great participation for this guided hike with Ted Hall, who has researched the 407 miles of the Lewis and Clark Expedition's 1805 westward land trail from Camp Fortunate near Dillon, Montana to Canoe Camp in Orofino, Idaho. He explained much of the Lewis and Clark party's descent from the ridge above Lost Trail Ski area as they went down in the vicinity of the Sacagawea ski run and down the ridge to a point near the Lost Trail Hot Springs. We started at a spot off FS roads 729 and 73468 about half way up the mountain off Hwy 93. Eventually there will be a sign designating the L & C Historic Trail there. We wandered west and north along an old narrow trail that led to a moist area of old growth trees, Englemann spruce and Douglas Fir, some of which had to have been there during the Discovery Expedition. We continued down the mountain ridge which at times became narrow enough that we knew

we had to be traveling in Lewis and Clark's footsteps. Ted pointed out the old very difficult wagon road that was used in the 1800s to travel from the Bitterroot Valley to Gibbonsville. Finding more "Witness Trees" and great views of the Saddle Mountain area, we couldn't have picked a better day for weather and color. Many thanks to Ted and his colleague Jim Randall, and to Kay Fulton and Micki Long who helped organize this amazing hike.



Courtesy Ginny Deck

Field Trip participants at a witness tree.

Montana Audubon Report: I-186

By David Cronenwett, Montana Audubon

This past summer, Montana Audubon officially signed on to a statewide effort in support of Initiative 186, which is now on the November election ballot. If passed, I-186 would require the state to issue permits for new hard rock mines only if such facilities can prove they would not generate waste that must be treated in perpetuity.

Calendar of Events

Oct 11,

16, 18, 23: RVRI and MPG Raptor Migration Volunteer opportunity, 11AM-3PM. RSVP for each event by contacting Josh Lisbon at jlisbon@mpgranch.com or 406-396-6285.

Oct 15: BOSQUE DEL APACHE NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE THROUGH THE EYES OF A BUDDING NATURALIST, Audubon Meeting, Teller Wildlife Refuge Slack Barn, Corvallis, MT, 7PM, Board Mtg. 5PM.

Oct 30: MPG Ranch Tour, 1:30-4PM, RSVP by contacting Josh Lisbon at jlisbon@mpgranch.com or 406-396-6285.



Volunteer Opportunities

Fall Raptor Migration

Thursday 10/11 11am - 3pm

Tuesday 10/16 11am - 3pm

Thursday 10/18 11am - 3pm

Tuesday 10/23 11am - 3pm

Join MPG and Raptor View Research Institute as we track the fall raptor migration. Volunteers will help observe and identify migrating raptors. Volunteers may also have the opportunity to observe banding. Please be sure to bring binoculars and dress for the fall weather! Space is limited. No lunch provided on these days. Please RSVP for each event to get directions and details.

Ranch Tour

Tuesday 10/30 1:30pm-4pm

Visit MPG to learn about our current projects and long-term goals. Driving tour is limited to accessible roads and by weather. Plan to spend some time walking and dress for the weather. The tour is limited to 6 participants. Please contact us to register. We will reply with directions.

Contact **Joshua Lisbon** to register or with any questions at:
jlisbon@mpgranch.com or **406-396-6285**.

Montana has 3,500 abandoned mines, more than 200 of which are known to be discharging contaminants and polluting our clean water. Our state has nearly 2,500 miles of streams polluted by acid mine drainage, lead, arsenic, and mercury from abandoned mines. Montana Audubon is keenly interested in protecting our state's water quality and riparian habitat. I-186 would be a positive step toward conservation of our precious water and wildlife resources. For more information, visit www.yeson186.org and don't forget to VOTE YES on I-186 this November!"

What's the story, Story?

By Jim Story

Question: How did birds evolve the use of eggs?

Answer: Females of all vertebrates produce eggs, but reptiles first used the eggshell, which enabled them to reproduce away from water. Birds, which evolved from reptiles, continued the use of eggs, but have improved on the design, size, shape, and color. Bird eggs provide everything for the embryo but oxygen and warmth. Oxygen is diffused into the egg through tiny pores in the shell; the same pores diffuse carbon dioxide outward. The proportion of the nutrient-bearing yolk varies between altricial (birds which hatch in an undeveloped state) and precocial (birds which hatch in a more mature and mobile state) birds. Altricial bird eggs generally contain about 25% yolk compared to 40% in precocial birds.

Local birding expert Jim Story answers your questions about birds and their habits. Jim welcomes your questions at jstory4689@gmail.com.

We are looking for wildlife transporters: Join the team!!

By Kate Stone

Many of the Bitterroot birds in need of rehabilitation and care have to make the trek north to Brooke Tanner at Wild Skies Raptor Center in Potomac. In 2017, Brooke cared for 32 raptors from the Bitterroot, including 4 eagles. Though she has a great network of volunteers, Brooke could surely use some more people to transport birds coming from the Bitterroot Valley. If you'd like to be put on a call list, please contact Wild Skies Raptor Center: 406-210-3468, 406-244-5422 montanawildskies@gmail.com.

Want to help but not sure about transporting wildlife? Brooke could also use donations of:

- Towels
- Animal Crates (L, XL, XXL)
- White vinegar
- Rubber Gloves

Contact Kate Stone if you want to donate any of these items and she'll coordinate getting them to Brooke: 406-381-1115.

News and Notes

Call for Photos

Bitterroot Audubon is seeking images of birds for a feature in our newsletter: *Bird Shots*. If you have taken a great photo and would like to submit it for consideration, please email the jpeg image, with a brief description, to BASeditors@gmail.com.

Bitterroot Audubon is on Facebook and Instagram

If you use Facebook or Instagram, please look for Bitterroot Audubon and "Like" us!

Bird Shots



*Courtesy Sara Ashline
Burrowing Owllet, Stevensville, MT, September 2018.*

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Chapter Only Membership

The Bitterroot Audubon Chapter Only Membership is \$15/year. These members will be supporting local chapter activities, receive the full color e-newsletter, and enjoy Chapter benefits. To join as a Chapter Only Member, complete this form.

Name: _____
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Send this application with \$15 to:



Bitterroot Audubon Society
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NATIONAL AUDUBON SOCIETY MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION



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