

Bitterroot AUDUBON



JANUARY 2023

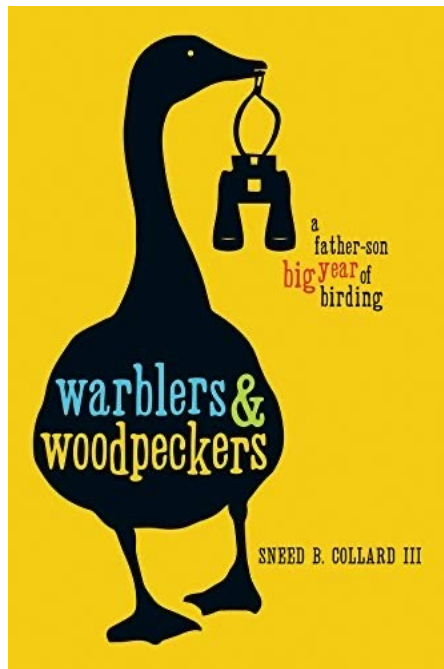
NEWSLETTER

VOLUME 37, NO. 5

A Father-Son Big Year of Birding and Beyond

By Sneed B. Collard III

Join Bitterroot Audubon as acclaimed author Sneed B. Collard III recounts the entertaining adventures behind his humorous, award-winning memoir *Warblers and Woodpeckers: A Father-Son Big Year of Birding* (Mountaineers, 2018) and other bird books and articles. Along the way, participants will travel to some of America's best birding hotspots as well as to South America, the Galápagos, and the Middle East. He'll also recall his sons and his "accidental Big Years" of 2022 featuring Pinky, America's most famous flamingo.



Sneed has written more than ninety books for young people including *Beaks! Fire Birds—Valuing Natural Wildfires and Burned Forests*; *Woodpeckers—Drilling Holes and Bagging Bugs*; *Waiting for a Warbler*; and his newest picture book, *Border Crossings*. Sneed is a popular, award-winning speaker and has spoken at numerous birding festivals and events. To learn more, visit his

websites www.sneedbcollardiii.com and www.FatherSonBirding.com. Sneed lives in Missoula.

If you would like to read some of Sneed's work before the program, we suggest *Warblers and Woodpeckers* (available at

<https://www.mountaineers.org/books/books/warbler-s-and-woodpeckers-a-father-son-big-year-of-birding>).

For a sample of his children's books, we suggest *Woodpeckers*; *Fire Birds*; and *Birds of Every Color* (available at

<https://mountain-press.com/collections/collard-sneed-b-iii>)

This is a Zoom-only program. Please register in advance, before 5 p.m. on January 16th.

Zoom Meeting Registration link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZYofuqopzkvE9DqwSdBWfYvvxwgLh74adMX>



Courtesy Sneed B. Collard III

Letter from the President

By Micki Long, BAS President

I must admit that I am happy to see 2022 behind us. On balance, it was a tough year for me. But birding was among the activities that helped cheer me. In May, I went on a birding trip to SE Arizona, with fellow Bitterroot Audubon Board member Susan Nelson. I love birding in that part of the country! And then, towards the end of the year, my yard saw several visits from Sharp-shinned Hawks and one visit from a Northern Goshawk. I loved watching them. Add the Stevensville Christmas Bird Count, which included great views of a Ferruginous Hawk, on the last day of the year, and I felt a little better about 2022. There is an interesting article on Audubon's site about the Christmas Bird Counts: <https://www.audubon.org/news/how-century-old-winter-tradition-could-help-protect-people-and-birds-another> I still hope 2023 will be better—and include more fun birding adventures. For now, those birding adventures will be close to home, and even at home, through my windows. In addition to raptors, I've been watching Dark-eyed Juncos clean up seed on the ground. I only have Oregon and Slate-colored Juncos visit my yard, and I have seen Yellow-eyed Juncos in SE Arizona. But I learned about many other regional variations in Audubon's recent article "Dark-eyed Juncos, Backyard Gems, Come in a Dazzling Array of Colors." The article includes a nice map to show us where these variations occur. See:

<https://www.audubon.org/news/dark-eyed-juncos-backyard-gems-come-dazzling-array-colors>.

If you enjoyed a fun and rewarding Christmas Bird Count experience this year, like I did, consider participating in Audubon's Climate Watch birding counts, which run January 15-February 15 and May 15-June 15. For more info, see:

https://www.audubon.org/conservation/climate-watch?ms=digital-eng-email-ea-x-engagement_20230104_eng-email_climate-watch-winter-2023&utm_source=ea&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=engagement_20230104_eng-email&utm_content=climate-watch-winter-2023.

While I don't make New Year resolutions, I do consider what I might want to accomplish in the upcoming year (okay—they sound like resolutions). I have some friends who are marvelous nature journalists. I have been inspired by them,



particularly after Valerie Bayer gave us a presentation on nature journaling in October. So, I am going to draw more instead of just writing. If all goes well, I will feel more confident in drawing native plants—and that's a hint to my other goal—to buy, plant, and care for more native plants in my yard. There are many websites that can help you decide what to plant if you want to join me in this goal. Among them are the Montana Native Plant Society's web page about what to plant in our area: <https://mtnativeplants.org/missoula-west-central-montana-native-plant-landscaping/>. My yard is a little bleak at the moment, so I am looking out the window, imagining what I'll see when I have improved the habitat and tempted more pollinators and birds to my yard

One aspect of life in Montana could threaten my hope for a better year in 2023. Elsewhere in this newsletter, you will see an article about the current legislative session. I urge you to read that article and sign up for Montana Audubon's Action Alerts. Laws passed in the last legislative session were tough on wildlife, especially wolves. In this session, legislators could again target (sorry for the pun) wildlife and the habitat on which it depends.



Ferruginous Hawk

Photo by Micki Long



Dark-eyed Junco.

Photo by Micki Long

Local Chapter Member Renewal

By Heather Miller

Your \$15 BAS membership renewal for the upcoming year is due January 31st. Renew online through the BAS website to support Bitterroot Audubon:

<http://www.bitterrootaudubon.org/membership> and click on the "Join Now" button to pay with credit card. You can also renew through mail by sending your name, address, email, and check (made out to the Bitterroot Audubon Society) to:

Bitterroot Audubon Supporting Member
P.O. Box 326, Hamilton, MT 59840

Calendar of Events

- Jan 16:** ZOOM Audubon Meeting/Program: *A Father-Son Big Year of Birding and Beyond*, 7PM, Zoom Board Mtg. 5PM.
- Jan 31:** Chapter-only membership renewal due, \$15.
- Jan-Aug:** Beginner Bird Walk at Lee Metcalf NWR, 3rd Saturday of each month, Stevensville, MT 10AM-12PM.

Montana's 2023 Legislative Session

By Micki Long

As I'm sure you're all aware, Montana's 68th Legislature began on January 2, 2023. The previous Legislature was a tough one for wildlife, most notably for wolves. Many conservation-minded groups are steeling themselves against what this session could bring. Among the most serious concerns is that some legislators are focusing on Montana's State Constitution and its inclusion of a "clean and healthful environment" among the inalienable rights listed in Article II, Section 3. Montana Audubon, Montana Wild, and the Montana Conservation Voters have provided information and tools to help you keep abreast of bills introduced in this legislation session.

First, Montana Audubon offers several ways to stay informed and take action. You can: 1) Subscribe to Action Alerts, 2) See what bills Montana Audubon is tracking, 3) Learn how to testify remotely, 4) See what committees Montana Audubon is watching, 5) and get contact info for your legislators and for staff at Montana Audubon who focus on the legislature.

<https://mtaudubon.org/conservation-policy/legislative-participation/>

On the Montana Wild site, you'll find info about anticipated attempts by legislators to modify the Montana Constitution's guarantee of a "clean and healthful environment."

<https://wildmontana.org/2022/12/15/insights/2023-mt-legislature-all-you-need-to-know/>

The Montana Conservation Voters offers a petition designed to protect the Constitution's "clean and healthful" promise; even if you don't want to sign the petition, you can learn much about the subject from the text of the petition. Keep in mind that it is usually more effective to contact your legislators in your own words, through phone call or emails. But if you prefer not to do so, consider signing this petition:

<https://secure.everyaction.com/mdZ0IkDT-UmXiNR1envIfA2?emci=9679a4ea-a587-ed11-9d7a-00224832e611&emdi=398887a7-b987-ed11-9d7a-00224832e611&ceid=694068>

This legislative session has the potential to seriously challenge the values promoted by Bitterroot Audubon: "We support Audubon's mission to conserve and restore natural ecosystems, focusing on birds, other wildlife, and their habitats for the benefit of humanity and earth's biological diversity."

<https://www.bitterrootaudubon.org/about-bitterroot-audubon-society>



Courtesy Micki Long

Bitterroot Christmas Bird Count Recap



Frosted beauty on the Hamilton CBC. Photo by Kate Stone



Susan Nelson, Lesley Rolls, and Kate Stone are all smiles as they are surrounded by Pygmy Nuthatches on the Stevi CBC. Superior selfie skills by Kate Stone



A foggy, frosty start to the Hamilton CBC on the Maki Ranch. The group searches for American Tree and Song Sparrows along Willow Creek. Photo by Kate Stone



Sherry and Torrey Ritter along the Bitterroot River for the Stevi CBC. Photo by Leslie Nyce



Susan Nelson and Lesley Rolls stroll across Sunset Bench Ranch during the Stevi CBC. Thanks to the Schroeder Family for access! Photo by Kate Stone.



Elena Ulev scans the pines of the Willoughby 40 for the Stevi CBC. Photo by Micki Long.

As coordinator for the Hamilton and Stevensville Christmas Bird Counts, I am privileged to see all different formats of reporting, ie: Excel spreadsheets, last year's (or older) form, this year's correct form, emails, texts, etc. The following brought a big smile to my face. Submitted by Paul Stanton (aka "Duckboy") of Hamilton. Sing it out loud! –Susan Nelson

*☞ Ten flickers flicking, Eight doves a-cooing, Four finches pecking,
Two magpies squawking, and a bald eagle in a bare tree ☞*

Bitterroot Audubon's

BIG YEAR

2023



Let's see how many total species our chapter members see **in Montana** from 1/1/23 until 12/31/23.

We'll count by using eBird and sharing our lists to a group eBird account.

Eric Rasmussen will present a workshop on using eBird for beginners or those who need a refresher, on Jan.9 at 3 p.m.

You must register in advance for this workshop:

https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZlvf-mrrzlsHtMr0etOS9Wcm06xfO_GETAC

After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the workshop.

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At large	Vic Mortimer*	

* Board Member

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WEBSITE: www.BitterrootAudubon.org

INSTAGRAM: @bitterroot_audubon
and on Facebook!

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: _____
Address: _____
City: _____
State: _____ Zip: _____
Email: _____

Send this application with \$15 to:



Bitterroot Audubon Society
PO Box 326
Hamilton, MT 59840-0326

NATIONAL AUDUBON SOCIETY MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION



Renew or Sign up
for your
National Audubon Membership at
Audubon.org