

Bitterroot AUDUBON



OCTOBER 2011

NEWSLETTER

VOLUME 26, NO. 2

Exploding Lakes, Ancient Fish and Lots of Birds!!

By Kate Stone

Bitterroot Audubon Chapter members can look forward to a very interesting and exciting program by Kate and Nathan Stone, who spent four weeks this past winter traveling in the Democratic Republic of Congo, Rwanda, and Tanzania, visiting friends and observing wildlife. This trip was Kate's third to the region. She spent a semester of college studying wildlife ecology and conservation in Tanzania and returned a year later to spend a summer studying the ecology of Lake Tanganyika. Several strong friendships developed from these visits, prompting Kate and Nathan to make a return trip.



Courtesy Kate Stone

Sacred Ibis in Ngorongoro Crater Conservation Area, Tanzania.

This region of Africa is home to some of the greatest concentrations of animals in the world and many species are unique to a very limited area. Conservation efforts vary by country and allocating resources to wildlife conservation is often not possible in the face of human conflict and political instability.



Courtesy Kate Stone

Eastern lowland gorilla in Kahuzi Biega National Park, Democratic Republic of Congo.

Kate and Nathan will present photographs from their trip, highlighting the many biological wonders of the region. They will also share the hopes and struggles of some of the families they visited, and how these families rise above some very challenging circumstances.



Courtesy Kate Stone

Kate Stone with Mama Bille in Arusha, Tanzania.

(Continued on page 2)

Nate Stone is a third-year law student at the University of Montana. Kate Stone is an ecologist for a private landowner in the Bitterroot Valley. Many of you know her as BAS's Field Trip Coordinator who can identify almost all the birds much before the participants hear or see them!! Kate is also the Web mistress for BAS.

Be sure to come to the October meeting, which will be at 7:00 P.M., Monday, October 17th. The meeting will be at the Lee Metcalf Wildlife Refuge, north of Stevensville. Snacks will be provided by Susie Duff. Contact Kay Fulton (642-3794) for additional information.

Letter from the President

By Kay Fulton, BAS President

Hi, BAS birders! Welcome to fall! What a great time of year! Actually it might still be summer with 80 degree temps! As you'll see in the newsletter, there are some great field trips scheduled as well as an exciting program on October 17th. I hope to see you out enjoying the fall migration of "Our Bitterroot Birds."

I want to give you a heads-up about what promises to be the movie of a lifetime for birders. On October 14th, Twentieth Century Fox will release "The Big Year," a major Hollywood motion picture devoted to birding. The movie is based on the book of the same title written by Mark Obamskik, which chronicles three colorful and obsessive birders as they compete for the biggest "Big Year." If you haven't read the book, you should do so, and then be sure to see the movie. The film stars are Owen Wilson, Jack Black, and Steve Martin, and the movie promises to be a "hoot."

The following is quoted from Mark Obamskik in the introduction of the book: "Me, I watch birds. Today I stroll in the park and I no longer see plain birds. I see gadwalls and buffleheads and, if I'm really on a hot streak, a single old squaw. A road trip finds me watching the sky as much as the pavement. It gets harder to pass a sewage treatment pond, that notorious bird magnet, without pulling out my binoculars. When somebody cries, "Duck!" I look up. Birding is hunting without killing, preying without punishing and collecting without clogging your home. Take a field guide into the woods and you're more than a hiker. You're a detective on a backcountry beat-----" Does this sound like any of you? -Kay



28th Season of Audubon Adventures for Teachers

By Leslie Nyce

Along with the start of a new school year comes the Audubon Adventures program. Bitterroot Audubon has participated in this National Audubon program for years and is offering the program to teachers around the valley. The title for the 2011-2012 kit is "Feathers, Fur, Fins and You," and is geared for kids grades 3-6. Participating classrooms will learn about *Pollinators* (featuring hummingbirds & bees), *Wild Alaska*, *Rivers of Life* and *Caring for Our Planet*. Each classroom will be provided with a Teacher Resource Manual, student handouts, hands-on activities for inside/outside, and an Official Certificate for participation. Teachers also receive a One-year membership to National Audubon and Audubon Magazine, which also means they are members of our local Bitterroot Audubon Chapter.

The Audubon Adventures program is provided at no cost to teachers because Bitterroot Audubon members generously provide donations to cover the fees for all the materials. The cost to sponsor a classroom is \$45.95. Partial contributions for half the amount may also be made. To sponsor a classroom, please make your check payable to Bitterroot Audubon and send it to:

Bitterroot Audubon
Attn: Audubon Adventures
P.O. Box 326
Hamilton, MT 59840

For more information or to register for the program, teachers should contact Leslie Nyce at 961-3808. **Special Thanks** to last year's sponsors: Marlene & Len Sauer, Judy & Bob Hoy, Judy & Jerry Williams, JoAnn & Doug Morris, Campbell Massey, Suzy & Doug Duff and Becky & Bill Peters. Thank you so very much for helping to educate our valley's kids about the natural world!

Would you like to see the newsletter in **COLOR**? Visit www.BitterrootAudubon.org and click the link to download the current newsletter or visit the archives.

You can sign up to have an e-copy sent to your email inbox by contacting Susie Duff, our Membership Chair at 961-5455 or sduff1@aol.com. Please include "Newsletter" in the subject line.

News and Notes

Bird call study at feeders

Do you have a well-visited bird feeder? Would you like to participate in a study to record bird sounds?

The Cornell Lab of Ornithology archives millions of recordings of bird sounds. However, very few of these sounds represent alarm calls or a documented response of one bird species to another. Kate Davis of Raptors of the Rockies and UM professor Erick Greene are working on a project to document and record bird alarm calls by presenting birds at feeders with various predator species. The predator species are captive birds that are controlled throughout the process (i.e., no birds are harmed!). Kate and Erick are looking for active bird feeders at the north end of the Valley (from Stevensville north) that they could visit for a few hours. If you'd be willing to have your bird feeder used in this project, please send an email to: raptors@montana.com.

Call for Photos

Bitterroot Audubon is seeking images of birds for a new 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 (who took the photo, what is the subject, where the photo was taken, and any interesting details) to BASeditors@gmail.com.

Lee Metcalf NWR, Stevensville, MT

New to birding? Beginner Bird Walks at the refuge sponsored by Bitterroot Audubon and Five Valleys Audubon are held the third Saturday of each month. Meet at the Refuge Visitor's Center on October 15th at 9AM for a two hour bird walk. Bring binoculars if you have them. Contact the refuge at (406) 777-5552 for more information.

Exclosure viewing and migrant bird banding- Saturday October 8, 9-noon.

Join members of the Bitterroot Audubon Important Bird Area committee for a tour of our recently constructed ungulate exclosures, built to protect riparian habitat on the floodplain of the Bitterroot River near Florence. This trip will combine a showcasing of the new exclosures with an opportunity for a close-up view of birds currently using the Bitterroot River Important Bird Area.

Participants will walk approximately 1 mile over uneven terrain to view exclosures and discuss habitat management options. They will spend approximately

an hour observing the capture and processing of birds caught in mist-nets. Some refreshments will be provided. Participants must register for this half-day trip. For more information and to register, contact Kate Stone at 381-1115.

Bird Shots



Courtesy Jennifer Love Deitrich
Rough-legged Hawk, Victor, MT, July 2011.

Calendar of Events

Oct 1

Join Steve Hoffman and Kate Davis for an all-day raptor migration field trip to Sula Peak. Contact Kate Stone 381-1115 to register.

Oct 8

AM Field trip to MPG ranch in Florence. Contact Kate Stone 381-1115 to register.

Oct 15

Beginner Bird Walk at Lee Metcalf NWR, 9-11AM

Oct 17

Audubon Meeting 7 pm, Lee Metcalf NWR
Board Mtg @ 5:30

Nov 21

Audubon Meeting 7pm, Location TBD
Board Mtg @ 5:30

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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 9 issues of the newsletter, and enjoy Chapter benefits. To join as a Chapter Only Member, complete this form.

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

Check this box to receive full color email-only newsletters delivered to your inbox.

Send this application with \$15 to:



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

NATIONAL AUDUBON SOCIETY MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Become a member of the **National Audubon Society** and **Bitterroot Audubon** [Chapter Code C1ZN580Z]. You will receive *Audubon* magazine, *Bitterroot Audubon Newsletter* and a membership card. *Introductory membership is \$20.*

Name: _____
Address: _____
City: _____
State: _____ Zip: _____

Send this application and your check to:



Audubon

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