

Bitterroot AUDUBON



APRIL 2012

NEWSLETTER

VOLUME 26, NO. 8

“Photography 101 for Birders”

The Bitterroot Audubon Society invites you to a program on nature photography by Patrick Chaplin, where you can learn techniques to improve your own photography. He will share some of his amazing photographs and explain techniques such as use of light, composition, and depth of field. Questions are welcome. This is our opportunity to find out how to get our photos ready for submission to the Bitterroot Audubon newsletter, the website and the future BAS calendar!



Courtesy Patrick Chaplin

Canada Geese

Patrick is an award-winning photographer who has had several photos published in magazines. He enjoys hiking around the Bitterroot Mountains and photographing the wonderful wildlife and landscapes on his treks. He resides in Hamilton with his wife and two children.

Join us on Monday, April 16th, at 7:00 P.M. at the Lee Metcalf Refuge Visitors Center (north of Stevensville), in the Okefenokee Room. The public is invited. Contact Kay Fulton (642-3794) for more information.

Lee Metcalf NWR: Public Comments Invited

On April 9, 2012 the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service will hold a meeting to hear comments from the public on the draft 15-year Comprehensive Conservation Plan and Environmental Assessment for the Lee Metcalf National Wildlife Refuge. The meeting will be held between 6:30 and 8:30 p.m. at the refuge office in Stevensville, Montana. The Service will make a short presentation on the draft plan, and will discuss the planning team's proposed actions. The public will then have an opportunity to offer their comments, which will be collected and presented to the planning team for consideration in the final plan. For directions to this meeting place and information on the document, please call the refuge headquarters at [\(406\) 777-5552](tel:4067775552) or email leemetcalf@fws.gov. You can also view the documents online at www.fws.gov/mountain-prairie/planning/ccp/mt/lmc/lmc.html.

If you cannot attend this open house, you may still provide written comments on this document by letter, fax, or email. All comments must be emailed or postmarked by April 30, 2012 to be considered.

Email: leemetcalf@fws.gov

Postal Mail: Laura King, Planning Team Leader, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 58355 Bison Range Rd., Moiese, Montana 59824

Fax: [406-644-2661](tel:4066442661) Attn: Laura King, Planning Team Leader

Thank You to Samantha O'Byrne and Hannah Spencer

Samatha, owner of Sam's Spade Garden Tools and Wares and Hannah, a licensed river guide, raffled a float trip and donated the proceeds (\$667) to Bitterroot Audubon. Congratulations to the winner, Quinty Smith.

Letter from the President

By Kay Fulton, BAS President

AMBIVALENCE: Winter or Spring, Winter or Spring, Winter or Spring?? Mother Nature and I have been sharing the same struggle for weeks: I love snow to look at, ski in, walk in, and play in, but I also love birds coming back to the Bitterroot, grass turning green, leaves budding out, flowers starting to bud and snow starting to melt! Oh, what to do, what to do??



Courtesy Kay Fulton

Lee Metcalf NWR.

Well, I'm not ambivalent about taking pictures. I have boxes of photographs (not in albums) taken with film cameras and now I have thousands of digital pictures on my computer (please don't crash). I love them all but I would like to learn how to improve my picture taking ability and how to put them onto DVDs. Maybe I'll learn some of that from Patrick Chaplin during his program entitled "Photography 101 for Birders" at the April 16th meeting! Come join us and share your photo feats.

Welcome Back Waterfowl Day at Lee Metcalf National Wildlife Refuge

by Judy Hoy

The 2012 Welcome Back Waterfowl Day on March 24 was a bit foggy at the beginning, but turned into a beautiful day, with just enough clouds to make great light for viewing the birds. Participants in the day's activities saw a total of 53 birds and three mammals on the refuge. The bird list included Tundra and Trumpeter swans, Bald and Golden Eagles, Turkey Vulture, three hawk species, American

Kestrel, Sandhill Cranes, Great Blue Herons on their nests at the rookery, three goose species and 13 duck species, as well as many other birds. The three mammals were Muskrat, Columbian Ground Squirrel and White-tailed Deer. Flyovers by Trumpeter Swans, Snow Geese, Tree Swallows, a pair of Sandhill Cranes, Ring-billed Gulls, a Turkey Vulture and a very interesting show provided by a Red-tailed Hawk dive-bombing a Golden Eagle directly overhead were special treats for all who saw them.

We thank the Lee Metcalf Refuge and staff for all their work and educational activities at the Visitor Center. Special thanks to Bob Danley, who helped with planning the day's activities, publicized the event, and gave a great program on John James Audubon. Thank you to Kay Fulton who brought goodies and a table. Thanks to all the Audubon members who brought scopes and helped beginners find and identify birds. Most of all thank you to all the people who came to view and learn about Montana's birds.

Editors Note: Thanks to Judy Hoy for helping to organize the Welcome Back Waterfowl Audubon events and for bringing her birds for the public to enjoy. See the complete bird list on page 4.



Courtesy Karen Griffing

Judy Hoy and her rehabilitated Long-eared Owl.

Wings Across the Big Sky
June 8–10, 2012, Kalispell, Montana

Spotlight on Flathead Audubon's Conservation Education Program

Flathead Audubon seeks to promote awareness and appreciation of the natural world through its Conservation Education Program. This program is the *only* staffed, locally independent program in the Flathead Valley that provides nature-based education free of charge. Close to five thousand children, youth and adults have been served during the past year through its community, family and school-related programs. And, it all happens with only one part-time, visionary education coordinator.

Flathead Audubon is striving to make the position of Conservation Education Coordinator sustainable for years to come. That's why Montana Audubon will be showing its support for this valuable program by sharing proceeds of the festival raffle, as well as dessert and live auctions at Saturday evening's banquet. And that's why we thank you for joining us in these lively fundraising events!

Friday Evening's Entertainment

Professor Avian Guano's "Migration Magic"

Professor Avian Guano, the world-renowned, eccentric German professor of ornithology will instruct and entertain us with his bird-brained slant on our neotropical avian friends. These "snowbirds" spend half their year in the tropics and half their year living with us in Montana. He will also answer some seemingly whacky questions, the answers to which are indispensable for every well-informed birder, including the following:

- How much food does a tiny kinglet need to stay at their required 111-degree body temperature through the fall, winter and spring?
- How many nests does a male wren make just to get female attention, and why does she then have extra-marital affairs?
- How do happenings in Colombia, Brazil and Mexico affect our quality of life here?

Plus a Bird Calling Contest!

Professor Avian Guano will also share his legendary mimicry of bird songs and be one of three judges for our bird-calling contest. Come prepared to be the first to recognize the good professor's imitations as well as to demonstrate your own bird calling prowess! Prizes will be awarded on the spot for the most accurate AND the most "loony" songs.

Call for Montana Audubon Award Nominations!

"Over the fruitful earth and across the sea goes the bright gleam of noble deeds." –Pindar

We are now seeking nominations for 4 awards that will be given away at the annual meeting in Kalispell. The awards acknowledge individuals who exemplify a commitment to birds, other wildlife, and habitat conservation. The awards will be given for Conservationist of the Year, Environmental Educator of the Year, Special Achievement, and Lifetime Achievement Award.

To nominate your candidate, please call the Montana Audubon office to request an award nomination form or download the form from our website at www.mtaudubon.org/about/awards.html. To be considered for this year's award, nominations and all supporting material must be postmarked no later than May 23, 2012. All nominations and supporting material should be sent to Montana Audubon, PO Box 595, Helena, MT 59624, or by fax: (406) 443-7144. The award ceremony will take place on June 9th at Montana Audubon's Bird Festival in Kalispell. Questions? Contact Janet Ellis at 406-443-3949 or jellis@mtaudubon.org.

Bird Shots



Courtesy Kay Fulton

Wild Turkey, Victor, MT, March, 2009.

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

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.

A New IBA Brochure is Available

Bitterroot Audubon and its Important Bird Area Committee are excited to announce a new brochure. *Our Birds Call This Home*, downloadable from bitterrootaudubon.org, provides guidance for managing riparian habitat for birds. This brochure was a collaborative effort by Bitterroot, Five Valleys, and Montana Audubon.

Bitterroot Audubon is on Facebook!

Bitterroot Audubon has created a Facebook page. If you use Facebook, please look for Bitterroot Audubon and "Like" us!

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 April 21st at 9AM for a two hour bird walk. Bring binoculars if you have them. Contact the refuge at (406) 777-5552 for more information.

Local Chapter Members

To simplify record keeping the board has approved making all chapter only memberships due on the first of the year, except for those joining in October,

2012 Welcome Back Waterfowl Day Species List

American Coot	Common Goldeneye	Marsh Wren	Rough-legged Hawk
American Goldfinch	Common Merganser	Northern Flicker	Sandhill Crane
American Kestrel	Common Raven	Northern Harrier	Snow Goose
American Robin	European Starling	Northern Pintail	Song Sparrow
American Tree Sparrow	Gadwall	Pileated Woodpecker	Tree Swallow
American Wigeon	Golden Eagle	Pygmy Nuthatch	Trumpeter Swan
Bald Eagle	Great Blue Heron	Red-breasted Nuthatch	Tundra Swan
Belted Kingfisher	Green-winged Teal	Red-tailed Hawk	Turkey Vulture
Black-billed Magpie	Hooded Merganser	Red-winged Blackbird	Western Meadowlark
Black-capped Chickadee	House Finch	Ring-billed Gull	White-breasted Nuthatch
Bufflehead	House Sparrow	Ring-neck Pheasant	Wood Duck
California Quail	Killdeer	Ring-necked Duck	
Canada Goose	Lesser Scaup	Rock Dove	
Cinnamon Teal	Mallard	Ross's Goose	

Calendar of Events

Apr 9-Public meeting on 15 year comprehensive conservation plan, Lee Metcalf NWR, 6:30 PM

Apr 13-2nd Deadline for Riparian Habitat Landowner Grant. Contact Sherry Ritter for a proposal form: s287ritter@mac.com

Apr 16- Audubon Meeting, Lee Metcalf NWR, 7 PM, Board Mtg at 5 PM

Apr 21-Beginner Bird Walk at Lee Metcalf NWR, 9-11AM

May 21-Audubon Meeting, Time and Location TBD

Jun 8-10, 2012-Montana Bird Festival, Kalispell

November or December of the previous year. Those memberships will expire December 31st one year later. As this is the first year for this policy, no local only members will be removed from the mailing list before the May newsletter.

Volunteers Needed

Volunteers are needed in late April and early May to help pull houndstongue within a portion of the Bitterroot River Important Bird Area. Funds from Bitterroot Audubon are supporting this project, solicited by L.M. and Colleen Powell. Participants will spend part of the day pulling weeds, then will have the opportunity to look for birds on a unique private property along the Bitterroot River.

Refreshments will be provided. Anyone interested in participating should contact Kate Stone to register: krogestone@hotmail.com; 381-1115.

BITTERROOT AUDUBON
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NONPROFIT
ORGANIZATION
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PERMIT No. 50

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Vice-Pres. & Conservation Chair	Fred Weisbecker*	375-9317
Secretary	John Ormiston*	363-5464
Treasurer	Jim Story*	961-4689

Directors & Committee Chairs

Programs	Kay Fulton*	642-3794
IBA Program	Sherry Ritter	777-7409
Website & Field Trips	Kate Stone*	381-1115
Education	Leslie Nyce* bas4education@hotmail.com	
Newsltr Eds	Sara Ashline*	529-6749
	Karen Griffing*	961-0181
Distribution	Sara Ashline*	529-6749
Hospitality	Rosan Stover	
Membership	Susie Duff*	961-5455
Publicity	Dave Lockman	777-2929
Rep. to MT Audubon	Becky Peters*	
At large	Judy Hoy*	777-2487
At large	Skip Horner*	642-6840
At large	Campbell Massey*	381-0197

* Board Member

EMAIL: contactus@bitterrootaudubon.org

WEBSITE: www.BitterrootAudubon.org

Chapter Only Membership

The Bitterroot Audubon Chapter Only Membership is \$15/year. These members will be supporting local chapter activities, receive 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

Membership Data Center
PO Box 422250
Palm Coast FL 32142-2250