

February 2013

Birding Observer



Five Valleys Audubon Society, a Chapter of the National Audubon Society

Calendar

- **Monday, February 4th:** Betsy Griffing will host the February board meeting at Axilon Law Group, 257 West Front Street, Suite B, Missoula, MT.
- **Saturday, February 9th:** Breaking Cabin Fever Field Trip to the Mission Valley, looking for wintering raptors and other birds from the North led by Terry McEneaney. This all-day field trip meets at the UM Field House at 800am for carpooling or the Cenex Station in Ronan at 900am. Bring a lunch. For more information, please call Terry Toppins at 214-1194.
- **Monday, February 11th, 7:30pm:** Terry McEneaney will discuss birding in Patagonia at the February program meeting.
- **Friday, February 15th:** Submission deadline for the March edition of the *Birding Observer*.
- **Saturday, February 16th:** Beginning bird walk at Lee Metcalf NWR from 10AM-Noon. Meet the field trip leader, Pat Little, at the Refuge Visitor's Center.
- **February 15th – 18th:** The 16th annual Great Backyard Bird Count (GBBC). Please see following article for details.



Five Valleys Audubon Society wants to save money and trees. We encourage you to get your newsletter delivered electronically. See page 5 for details.

Patagonia: In search of gauchos and Andean condors

Terry McEneaney will discuss birding in Patagonia at the February program meeting on **Monday, February 11th** at 7:30 pm in room L14 of the Gallagher Business Building on the UM campus.

Terry is the retired ornithologist of Yellowstone National Park. He has lived and worked throughout Montana (e.g. Red Rock Lakes NWR, C.M. Russell NWR, Garnet Ghost Town). He is the author of three books (*Birds of Yellowstone*, *Birding Montana*, and *Uncommon Loon*) and many popular and scientific articles. His specialty is field biology. In his spare time he is a guide for the world bird tour company Field Guides Inc. (Austin, Texas).

Following Terry's presentation, Kyle Vanatta, a 2012 recipient of a \$350 P.L. Wright research grant, will present the results of his investigation of "The effects of physical environments on host finding by the insect parasitoid *Trichogramma deion*".

Great Backyard Bird Count

The 16th annual Great Backyard Bird Count (GBBC) runs from February 15th thru February 18th. Participating is easy. Simply watch birds for at least 15 minutes at the location of your choice on one or more of the count days, estimate the number of birds you see for each species you can identify, and report your observations. On the web site www.birdcount.org you'll select your location on a map, answer a few questions, enter your tallies, and then submit your data to share your sightings with others around the world.

"The GBBC is an ideal opportunity for young and old to connect with nature by discovering birds and to participate in a huge science project," said Gary Langham, Audubon's Chief Scientist.

Peeps from the Board: 2012 Financial Update

by Kit Stevens

Our Five Valleys Audubon Society is a chapter of the National Audubon Society, promoting the conservation of birds, other wildlife & their habitats through our birding, conservation & educational activities. We share core values with National Audubon Society & Montana Audubon while our focus is on local issues & projects.



At the end of December 2012, Five Valleys

Audubon had assets of approximately \$5,500 in a checking account and \$37,000 in an investment account. The Phil Wright Endowment Fund has a separate investment account and held approximately \$67,500. A portion of the income from this endowment fund is specifically earmarked for research scholarships with the balance reinvested in the fund to keep up with inflation and to eventually fully fund the scholarships. In addition to the annual budget, there is a five year plan formed in 2010 reserving funds for Important Bird Area and other conservation and education based projects.

Our fiscal year runs July-June and each year, we adopt an annual budget. Anticipated income for the July 2012-June 2013 year is approximately \$15,000 with projected expenses approximately \$12,000. Monthly financial reports are produced and reviewed at the board meetings. For our fiscal year ending 6/30/12, our income totaled \$20,369 and our expenses were \$12,400 with the excess being invested in our investment funds.

Our fiscal year 2012 income derived from:

- The 2012 Birdathon brought in over \$10,000 in contributions! (60% of income)
- Membership fees, both chapter only & a portion of the National Audubon dues (16%)
- General donations (8%)
- Contributions toward Audubon Adventure kits sent to local schoolteachers to use in their curriculum (6%)
- Dividends & gain in value from our investment accounts (8%)
- Fundraising-from trips, bird classes, local events such as the Bird Migration Celebration, sales of books (2%)

Our expenses included:

- Production & mailing of the monthly newsletter (27% of expenses)
- IBA expense (contribute to Boyer Easement) (20%)
- Purchase of Audubon Adventure Kits for local school teachers (12%)
- Phil Wright Awards (17%)
- Dues paid to Montana Audubon (8%)
- Donations to Montana Audubon Bird Distribution Book (8%)
- Misc Office expenses-Mt Annual Report, Website support, post office box fee(5%)
- Marketing- A display board for our table at the Bird Migration Celebration and Snowy Owl stuffed animals given out at various functions(3%)

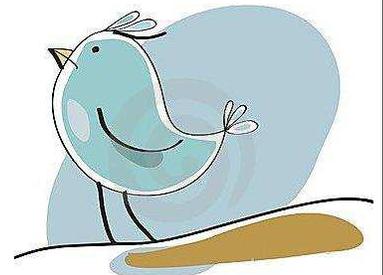
Five Valleys Audubon Society has a strong financial base and as a board, we strive to make responsible decisions with the generous contributions we receive, such as contributing to the Boyer Conservation Easement in 2011. I hope this synopsis of our financial structure keeps you assured that your contributions to Five Valleys Audubon Society are locally & wisely used. If you have any questions, you can always contact me.

~ Kit Stevens, Treasurer.

Board Update

Five Valleys Audubon Society will hold its **Annual Membership Meeting on Monday, March 11th**, during the regular monthly meeting.

A **nominating committee** has formed to identify candidates for three vacant board positions – Secretary, Membership Promotion Chair, and Director (at large). The nominating committee is Larry Weeks, Lynn Tennefoss, and Jim Brown. If you are interested in joining the board, or if you have a suggestion for someone who might be a good candidate, please contact one of the nominating committee members. Elections will take place at the annual meeting on March 11th.



2012 Field Trip Bird List by Larry Weeks

During the 2012 calendar year, the Chapter conducted 19 field trips which included the Mission Valley (4), Maclay Flat (3), Flesher Pass (2), Metcalf, Warm Springs, Brown's Lake, Freezout, Bandy Ranch, Bannack/Clark Canyon, Clearwater Lakes, Boyer properties, Ninepipes, and the Kim Williams trail. If someone had participated in all 19 field trips, they would have seen, or had the opportunity to see, 196 species. The best field trip of the year was the 2-day trip to Freezout Lake and the Rocky Mountain Front led by Joe Elliott. There were 121 bird species documented on that trip which included 2 red knots and a Baltimore oriole. The 3 winter trips to the Mission Valley had up to 10 snowy owls and a gyrfalcon. There were red-breasted mergansers on 2 trips, the Brown's Lake trip had a great gray owl and the Bannack trip had a burrowing owl, gray flycatcher and a green-tailed towhee. During the 2 trips to the raptor banding site near Flesher Pass, Rob Domenech caught 3 golden eagles.

January Field Trips

January 12th: Despite 5-degree weather, five people joined Terry Toppins for a bird walk at Maclay Flats. The walk was fast-paced, inspired by the temperature. The group saw only a few birds, including a Bald Eagle and Pygmy Nuthatch, but everyone seemed to feel it was rather a beautiful day. One point of interest was a tree with a number of small owl pellets underneath, but no owl. We ended up with nine species, and the temperature warmed up to 10-degrees.

January 19th: Four adults and two children delighted in winter sun, clear air and an array of great birds on the Beginning Birding Field Trip at Lee Metcalf NWR. Aided by trip leader Lynn Teneffoss and Refuge Education Specialist Bob Danley, participants found, identified and learned about 12 species, including excellent views of a Hooded Merganser and pair of Common Goldeneye in Refuge Headquarters ponds and a variety of raptors in the fields and trees visible from around the building - Rough-legged and Red-tailed Hawks, Northern Harrier and an immature Bald Eagle were scoped and identified. Male Ring-necked Pheasants were also easy to see and very amusing to watch as they ran across nearby fields and iced-over ponds.

Next month's Beginning Birding Field Trip will take place during the Great Backyard Bird Count and attendees will

have the opportunity to practice observing and entering data for the GBBC, in preparation for feeder watching at home over the rest of the weekend!

Naturalist's Mercantile

There is a new nature store open in Missoula. Mat Seidensticker and Peggy Persico have opened the Naturalist's Mercantile at 131 E. Main St (phone 544-0227). It's not that far from where the old Birdwatcher's Country Store was. They carry books and binoculars, clothing and bags, artistic bird houses and mounted skeletons - frogs, snakes, birds. There's a kids section—the Little Naturalist—with books, games, and toys for children. In back of the store is a room full of bird food and feeders. They have sunflower and suet, corn and peanuts. And various mixes are available in bulk. They even deliver! Check them out next time you're in town. On First Friday they have special events too.

The 14th Annual Wings Across the Big Sky Festival June 7th -- June 9th, 2013 in Lewistown, Montana!

You are invited to join Montana Audubon and Lewistown for dynamic birding field trips, great speakers, interesting presentations, and fun festivities as we celebrate efforts to conserve our birds and wildlife in the heart of Montana.

Keynote speaker John Marzluff will share the amazing world of corvid intelligence with us!

Experience Central Montana and all it has to offer either through festival field trips or your own exploration!

- Lewistown Trail System
- Snowies, Moccasins, Belts, Judiths, and Highwoods
- Big Springs Trout Hatchery
- Charles M. Russell National Wildlife Refuge
- Big Spring Creek Fishing
- An official Cornell Lab of Ornithology eBird Trail Tracker, the first and only in the state, will be available in the lobby of the festival hotel, the Yogo Inn, to record your sightings!

Watch mtaudubon.org and this newsletter for updates and information about how you can register and participate!



Missoula Christmas Bird Count by Larry Weeks, Compiler



Saturday, December 15, 2012: Missoula set another Count Day record with 87 species. There were several unusual birds which included lesser goldfinch reported by Denver Holt, Gordon Skaggs had a Swainson's thrush in his yard and got good photos, Shirley Holden had a gray catbird, Kay Lambert had a varied thrush, Thomas Kallmeyer had 3 hoary redpolls in a large flock of common redpolls in Butler Creek, Denver, Jim Brown and Rose Leach each had ferruginous hawks, Jim Brown and Robin Anderson had Virginia rails, and Terry Toppins found a great gray owl. Harris' sparrows were found at the BLM feeder at the Fort and at the Smyers' feeder. Jim Sparks had the only pied-billed grebe in the upper Clark Fork River. Paul Loehnen's group birded Council Grove and the Kona Ranch and had the only northern shoveler, Barrow's goldeneye and swans. Rose Leach's group birded Mullan Road and had the only American wigeon and bufflehead. Cathy Ream's group had the only dusky grouse on the Boehmler property at the head of LaValle Creek. Jim Brown's group had the only marsh wrens, and Roy Cellan had the only Clark's nutcracker at his feeder in Colorado Gulch. Erick Greene had a teal with a blue speculum which should count as a species because we did not have a blue-winged teal or a cinnamon teal. Poody and Joe Regan had 3 northern saw-whet owls on Kelly Island for the second year in a row. Chestnut-backed chickadees were reported at 2 locations; the Loehnen's feeder up Grant Creek and Radd Icenoggle's hike up the Stewart Peak trail. Other group leaders included Paul Hendricks (Marshall Canyon to Woods Gulch), Sue Reel and Dick Hutto (Sleven's Island), Norm & Cathy Smyers (Tower St. Open Space & State Nursery), and Zona Lindemann (Target Range & Orchard Homes). There were 88 participants in the field and 25 feeder watchers. Total birds for the Count was 7634 which was slightly below the 14-year average of 8400. The feeder watchers had 48 species and 2158 total birds. The Count concluded with a potluck dinner at Ruth & Russ Royters' home which is always entertaining. It was an outstanding Count and my thanks to all the participants and the Royters.

Christmas Bird Count 2012

Pied-billed grebe (1)	wild turkey (73)	brown creeper (20)
great blue heron (65)	Killdeer (28)	Pacific wren (4)
swan sp. (2)	Wilson's snipe (13)	marsh wren (2)
Canada goose (495)	rock pigeon (314)	American dipper (5)
Green-winged teal (11)	Eurasian-collared dove (251)	Golden-crowned kinglet (36)
Mallard (563)	mourning dove (98)	Townsend's solitaire (19)
blue-winged/cinnamon teal (1)	Virginia rail (3)	gray catbird (1)
northern shoveler (1)	great horned owl (20)	American robin (4)
Gadwall (6)	northern pygmy-owl (5)	varied thrush (1)
American wigeon (5)	great gray owl (1)	Swainson's thrush (1)
common goldeneye (161)	Long-eared owl (27)	Bohemian waxwing (1159)
Barrow's goldeneye (5)	northern saw-whet owl (4)	cedar waxwing (120)
Bufflehead (20)	belted kingfisher (28)	northern shrike (10)
hooded merganser (3)	downy woodpecker (61)	European starling (149)
common merganser (8)	hairy woodpecker (26)	American tree sparrow (15)
bald eagle (22)	northern flicker (155)	song sparrow (42)
golden eagle (3)	pileated woodpecker (21)	Harris' sparrow (2)
northern harrier (3)	Steller's jay (22)	Dark-eyed junco (186)
Sharp-shinned hawk (8)	blue jay (5)	Red-winged blackbird (98)
Red-tailed hawk (58)	Clark's nutcracker (1)	pine grosbeak (58)
ferruginous hawk (4)	Black-billed magpie (296)	house finch (422)
Rough-legged hawk (34)	American crow (83)	red crossbill (15)
American kestrel (7)	common raven (260)	common redpoll (251)
Merlin (8)	Black-capped chickadee (308)	hoary redpoll (3)
prairie falcon (1)	mountain chickadee (64)	pine siskin (40)
gray partridge (31)	Chestnut-backed chickadee (9)	American goldfinch (50)
Ring-necked pheasant (13)	Red-breasted nuthatch (149)	lesser goldfinch (1)
dusky grouse (1)	White-breasted nuthatch (25)	evening grosbeak (10)
ruffed grouse (3)	pygmy nuthatch (107)	house sparrow (474)
		87 species

Welcome New Members:

Saul Bramel
Tom W. Deveny
Elle Furrow
Kathy L. Knudsen
Barbara Holmes-Smith
Lucy A. Steinmetz
Vicki Watson

Bill Burnett
Gerald Fetz
Barbara Hauf
Nancy H. Matthews
Rose D. Smith
Kevin Wagner
Ashley Widfeldt

Stacy Crabb
Sharon Fuller
Sherrill Herman
Barbara W. Merriam
Kathleen Springer
Donna Warren
Suzette Archibald-Wilson



Dean Yould

GO GREEN and SAVE !



Do you want to help Five Valleys Audubon Society save money, paper and volunteers' time? Please consider viewing your *Birding Observer* online. In addition your online copy will have 'color' content and you will receive your newsletter much earlier than the mailed hard copy!

If you can **Go Green** and wish to receive your *Birding Observer* only via email, just send us a request with your name to Vick Applegate at k7vk@arrl.net. You can also always find your current newsletter on the Five Valleys Audubon Society's website at: www.fvamisoula.org. Thanks!

Join Five Valleys Audubon Society

Please enroll me as a Chapter member of the Five Valleys Audubon Society. I will receive the *Birding Observer* and may participate in all local Chapter activities. I understand that my dues remain entirely with the Chapter.

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Please note: The newsletter will be delivered electronically unless requested otherwise.

\$15 is enclosed for Chapter-only membership

An additional sum of \$ _____ is also included to support Chapter activities.

Please make check payable to the Five Valleys Audubon Society and mail to:

**Five Valleys Audubon Society
PO Box 8425
Missoula, MT 59807**

Join National Audubon Society & Five Valleys Audubon Society

Please enroll me as a member of the National Audubon Society and my local Chapter. I will receive the *Audubon* magazine and the *Birding Observer*, and I may participate in all local Chapter activities. I understand that my dues are shared between NAS and my local Chapter.

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Please note: The newsletter will be delivered electronically unless requested otherwise.

\$20 for a 1-year individual or family membership

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Please make the check payable to National Audubon Society and mail to:

**National Audubon Society
PO Box 422250
Palm Coast, FL 32142-2250**



TO:

Five Valleys Audubon Society Board of Directors

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Secretary	Vacant			
Treasurer	Kit Stevens	230 Bickford St., Missoula 59801	721 - 3530	dogmakit@yahoo.com

DIRECTORS:

2011-2014	Carolyn Goren	PO Box 7189, Missoula, MT 59807		carolyngoren@gmail.com
2011-2014	Gerhard Knudsen	4400 Scott Allen Dr, Missoula, 59803		gmk@bresnan.net
2011-2014	Lynn Tennefoss	8850 O'Brien Creek Rd, Missoula, MT 59804		ltennefoss@audubon.org
2012-2015	Clancy Cone	5604 Bridger Court #2, Missoula, MT 59803		
2012-2015	Betsy Griffing	257 W Front St, Ste. B, Missoula, MT 59802		

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