

September 2014

Birding Observer



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

Calendar of Events

- **Tuesday, September 2nd:** The next board meeting will be on Sept 2nd (the Tuesday following Labor Day) at Betsy's office - Axilon Law Group, 257 W Front St, downtown Missoula.
- **Monday, September 8th, 7:30 pm:** Join us at the September program meeting to hear Jim Brown discuss birding in Colombia. The meeting will be held in room L14 of the Gallagher Business Building on the UM campus.
- **Sunday September 14th:** Birding Missoula's West End led by Terry and Carole Toppins. Meet in the NE corner of the Adams Center Parking Lot for an 8am departure for a half day field trip taking advantage of some of Missoula's open spaces. For more information call Terry Toppins at 214-1194.
- **Monday, September 15th:** Submission deadline for the October edition of the *Birding Observer*.
- **Saturday, September 20th:** Beginning bird walk at Lee Metcalf NWR from 10am-Noon. Meet the field trip leader at the Refuge Visitor's Center.



Blue-naped Chlorophonia
Photo by Jim Brown

Birds and Birding Adventures in Colombia

At 1,900 species, Colombia has more bird species than any other country in the world, including Brazil. The incredible biodiversity is largely explainable by its climate and geography: tropical rainforests; Andean mountains split into three ranges; tropical glaciers; vast plains, coasts on two oceans with mangroves, coral reef islands and atolls; deserts and a myriad of rivers and streams. Join us at our first fall program on Monday, September 8th at 7:30 p.m. in room L14 of the Gallagher Business Building at UM.



Scarlet-bellied Mountain-Tanager
Photo by Jim Brown

To experience this diversity, Jim Brown visited Colombia last January on a birding tour led by Field Guides Birding Tours. Six birders and two guides birded from the Bogota area at 10,000 foot elevation through the Magdalena Valley, up both sides of the East and Central Andes to Santa Marta along the Atlantic Ocean. Much of the birding was done in ProAves Nature Reserves dedicated to conservation of critical habitats. They tallied an amazing 582 bird taxa.

His illustrated talk for the September 8 program will include slides of many of the bird species observed and their habitat niches. Jim has been an avid birder for 60 years. He is past president of Montana Audubon and Five Valleys Audubon and a board member of Five Valleys Land Trust. He spends much of his free time working to achieve conservation of wild lands and natural resources. Before retiring he was a forest scientist with the U.S. Forest Service.

Peeps From The Board

By Pat Little

Five Valleys Audubon Society had an exciting year. The following is a summary of achievement from July 2013 thru June 2014.

- **Philip L Wright Research Awards** – we provided funds to assist three undergraduates and a graduate student at UM get started in research, about \$3,000 combined. This program has provided “starter” funds to 72 students since 1981, some of whom are now in senior positions within academia.
- **Audubon Adventures** – we funded distribution of National Audubon’s “Audubon Adventures” magazine and teaching guides to 29 classrooms in and around Missoula. Feedback from the teachers is enthusiastic. We also provide classroom talks and field trips for these schools, and others, through our **Community Naturalist program**, which this year expanded to include working with **Missoula Parks & Recreation** to provide bird talks to children in their Head Start and summer camp activities, and adults in their “Let’s Move Missoula” program.
- We are advocating for the University of Montana to improve the situation of the **Philip L Wright Zoological Museum** which is short of space and lacks a permanent curator. Our goal is to help persuade the University to provide funding to put the museum on a sustainable footing; we sent letters to UM President & Deans, and to UM Foundation. It seems that a serious fundraising effort is now getting under way.
- We donated two backpacks to the **Missoula Public Library** that can be borrowed by residents. They contain a pair of binoculars, a bird book, our local hotspots brochure, and instructions on how to focus the binoculars. They can be checked out at the reference desk, 721-BOOK (2665).

- We published a leaflet on **Feeding Birds Responsibly in Bear Country**, with information about when to hang feeders, how to reduce bear attractants, and ways to avoid window collisions near feeders. We have distributed the leaflet



- to homes in the more bear-inhabited parts of town, and made it available to the public at events, and there is a summary on our web site.
- We tabled at a **Non-Lead Ammo** event at the university which was well attended and, surprisingly, non-confrontational.
- Missoula Parks & Rec’s **Conservation Lands** staff approached us to provide information on grassland-nesting birds, and we will be doing surveys and providing advice on management.
- **Bird surveys** – We provide data to support conservation efforts in the Mission Valley (long-billed curlews) and the Clark Fork–Grass Valley IBA, as well as participating in the Christmas Bird Count.
- We are working with Five Valleys Land Trust to design a nature walk and interpretive signage at their new **Rock Creek confluence** property, and doing bird surveys to generate a species list.
- We continue to comment on **subdivision proposals** to Missoula City & County planners when we see issues that need addressing. The planners include us when sending out notification and requests for comments.
- Our bi-annual **advanced birding class** was popular this year, with about 50 attendees.

Go Green and Save!

Do you want to help Five Valleys Audubon Society save money, paper and volunteer time? Please consider reading your **Birding Observer** online. Your online copy will contain content in color, and you will receive your newsletter much earlier than the mailed hard copy! If you wish to receive your **Birding Observer** via email, just send us a request with your name to Vick Applegate at k7vk@arrl.net. You can also find your current newsletter on the Five Valleys Audubon Society website at www.fvaudubon.org. Thanks!

Welcome New Members

Andrea Allen
Barry Brown
Krystle Downing
Cindy Holder
Warren Midyett
Dorothy Morrison
Judith & Byron Olson
Marjorie Stephens
Vickie Voss

Carol Barbian
Kathleen Cooney
Armand Fangsrud
Carrie Jamrogowicz
Chip Miller
Jennifer Nelson
Angela M. Palin
Wendy Ryan
Dwight Young



Bluebird eggs
in a nest at the
North Hills

Bluebird Trail Update By Kathy Heffernan

On a hot, dry August day, we cleaned out the last of the bluebird nests from North Hills boxes and assessed the success of bluebird families this season. Of the 36 bluebird boxes we maintain in the Waterworks/North Hills area, 18 were used by bluebirds. Western Bluebirds successfully fledged 80 nestlings and Mountain Bluebirds fledged 42 nestlings for a **total of 122 bluebird fledglings in 2014**. This number is up from 92 in 2013 and 59 in 2012. In addition, the bluebird boxes and a few special swallow boxes housed Tree Swallows who fledged at least 68 nestlings.

The bluebird project in the North Hills was assisted this summer by Sarah Hanauer, a University of Arizona intern, who banded the bluebirds. Youth volunteers Krista Loewenwarter, Maya Heffernan, Liana Dillon, and biology students from Sentinel High School assisted in monitoring boxes. We also appreciate the support of the City of Missoula, the Peschel family, and the hiking public.

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:

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PO Box 422250
Palm Coast, FL 32142-2250

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

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www.fvaudubon.org

Montana Audubon
PO Box 595, Helena, MT 59624
(406) 443-3949
www.mtaudubon.org

OFFICERS:			
President	Pat Little	493 – 7115	roughleg@gmail.com
Vice President	Rose Leach	721-0779	rleach-2@bresnan.net
Secretary	Andrea Stierle	782 – 6419	andrea.stierle@mso.umt.edu
Treasurer	Kit Stevens	721 - 3530	dogmakit@yahoo.com
DIRECTORS:			
2014-2017	Carolyn Goren	544 - 1060	
2014-2017	Gerhard Knudsen		gmk@bresnan.net
2014-2017	Scott Hampton	(417) 343-3499	wscotthampton@gmail.com
2012-2015	Clancy Cone		
2012-2015	Betsy Griffing		
2013-2016	Ed Monnig	549 – 0580	emonnig01@gmail.com
COMMITTEES:			
Member Records	Vick Applegate	549 – 0027	k7vk@arri.net
Membership Promotion	Jerry Dirnberger	360 – 5133	
Program	Carolyn Goren		carolyngoren@gmail.com
Conservation Advocacy	Vacant		
Habitat Protection & Restore	Jim Brown	549 – 8052	brownjs2@bresnan.net
Field Activities	Terry Toppins	214 – 1194	tertop@aol.com
Publicity	Poody McLaughlin	543 – 4860	pmcregan@bresnan.net
Education	Larry Weeks	549 – 5632	bwsgenea@gmail.com
PL Wright Endowment	Bill Gabriel	273-6880	biograf@earthlink.net
University Liaison	Winsor Lowe	243 - 6364	
Newsletter Editor	Bev Orth Geoghegan	(406) 750-0149	orthbev@hotmail.com
Newsletter Circulation	Hedwig Vogel-Wright	549 – 7251	
Web Site	Pat Little	493 – 7115	roughleg@gmail.com
Archivist	Shirley Holden		
Audubon Adventures	Barbara Ross	552 – 0500	bjmross@gmail.com
Christmas Bird Count	Larry Weeks	549 – 5632	bwsgenea@centric.net
Past President	Paul Loehnen	721 – 7517	ploehnen@gmail.com

Steve Hoffman, Executive Director
shoffman@mtaudubon.org

Janet Ellis, Program Director
jellis@mtaudubon.org

Norane Freistadt, Development Director
norane@mtaudubon.org

Amy Cilimburg, Director of Conservation & Climate Policy
amy@mtaudubon.org

Darcie Vallant, Center Director
darcie@mtaudubon.org

Heather Bilden, Education Director
heather@mtaudubon.org

Amy Seaman, Bird Conservation Associate
aseaman@mtaudubon.org

Fred Weisbecker, Board President