

# YELLOWSTONE VALLEY AUDUBON SOCIETY

- FROM THE PRAIRIES TO THE PEAKS.

*Mission: Building on the tradition of special interest in birds, Yellowstone Valley Audubon Society is organized to promote enjoyment and protection of the natural environment through education, activism, and conservation of bird habitat.*

VOLUME 43, NUMBER 3

MARCH 2013

## New This Issue

- Citizen Action Guide to the Montana Legislature
- Conservation Grant Winners
- YVAS Birding Maps
- Wings Across the Big Sky Festival



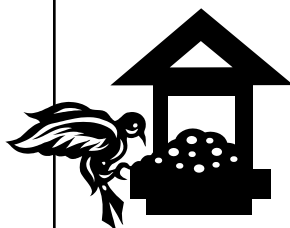
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## "CAN WE BALANCE NATURE?"

### \*DISEASE IN WILD BIRDS: PRECAUTION AND PREVENTION

Monday March 18<sup>th</sup> at 7:00pm



- What do you do if you spot a sick bird or, worse yet, multiple sick or dying birds ?
- Where do all the pigeons (rock doves), crows and Canada geese come from?

Our speaker Jennifer Ramsey is a highly-regarded wildlife veterinarian who works with Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks. Dr. Ramsey's job includes necropsy on wild animal carcasses, looking for possible disease outbreaks, among other things, that can be checked before they get out of hand. She will talk about common diseases and issues affecting the health of wild birds in Montana. Backyard feeders and citizen scientists can serve as an early warning system for problems in nature. If a disease does occur in your yard, what are your responsibilities as a bird lover? People who feed or attract many birds need to be especially careful about feeder cleaning during disease outbreaks.

Billings, along with many Montana cities and towns from Miles City to Butte, is facing the issues that come with large congregations of pigeons, crows and Canada geese. Joining Dr. Ramsey will be Stella Capoccia, professor of biology from Montana Tech of the University of Montana, who is involved with the City of Butte's pigeon (rock dove) control plan. She will discuss how the disease vector relates to this project. The rock dove is dependent on humans for success because they are poor nest builders. Thus, experts hope to control the birds by focusing on their nesting and foraging habits.

**\*Disease in wild birds is called ZONOSIS:** A zoonotic disease or zoonosis is an infection or infestation shared in nature by humans and other animals.

## YVAS MEETINGS

**All YVAS Meetings are at Mayflower Congregational Church, corner of Rehberg Lane and Poly Drive, Billings, MT unless otherwise noted. The public is welcome, there is no admission fee and ample free parking is available.**

**Monday, March 11, 6:00pm: Board of Directors Meeting**

**Monday, March 18, 7:00pm: General Membership Meeting**

**We will hold a YVAS fundraiser dinner at 5:45, before the membership meeting. Dinner donation: \$6. Steve Regele and Bill DeMeyer have generously volunteered to host. Please contact Steve at 962-3115 or [sregele@juno.com](mailto:sregele@juno.com), before March 16th to make reservations and tell them what you will bring.**



☞ We're on the web! [yvaudubon.org](http://yvaudubon.org)

THIS FLYER IS PUBLISHED ON SFI CERTIFIED PRODUCT



# CELEBRATION

In celebration of Yellowstone Valley Audubon's 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary on April 15, the YVAS Board of Directors is selling the popular Binocular Strap or Harness. The leather patch is engraved with the YVAS logo and commemorates our 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary. The Binocular Strap, which is made in the USA, will be available at our Chapter Meetings until they are gone. They can be purchased for \$20. The supply is limited, so get your while they last! Contact Deb Regele 962-3115, [dregele@juno.com](mailto:dregele@juno.com) for more information.

# MEMBERSHIP NOTICE

In February, YVAS members received a duplicate copy of the January Flyer instead of the February issue that was scheduled to be mailed. This resulted from an unfortunate glitch in the modern-day digital process. Fortunately, YVAS did not incur duplicate mailing charges, but many of you were kind enough to call us with your concerns. Occasionally, we have an error in the Flyer, changes in meeting schedules or locations, cancelled field trips or other events, and last minute information that we would like to inform you about. If you want to be kept up-to-date on last-minute YVAS news, **send your e-mail address to [nwiggins83@gmail.com](mailto:nwiggins83@gmail.com), or call and leave your phone number at 651-0218**, and we will put you on our notification list. Your email or telephone information will not be shared with any other organization.



**BLUEBIRD TRAILS** If you missed any of the handouts about building bluebird boxes, feeding or attracting bluebirds from our February meeting, contact Shelia McKay at [wjhbird@yahoo.com](mailto:wjhbird@yahoo.com), 652-7175 or 694-7918

**Yellowstone Valley Audubon Society Officers:**

**President:** Bill DeMeyer, 671-7501, battie@bresnan.net  
**Vice-President:** Steve Regele, 962-3115, sregele@juno.com  
**Secretary:** Dorothy Bartlett, 252-0757, dpadanyi@live.com  
**Treasurer:** Deb Regele: 962-3115, dregele@juno.com  
**Past-President:** open

**Board of Directors:**

Donn Bartlett: 252-0757, [donnbartlett@msn.com](mailto:donnbartlett@msn.com)  
 Rita Harding: 259-7586, [mtroses22@bresnan.net](mailto:mtroses22@bresnan.net)  
 Shelia McKay: 652-7175, cell 694-7918, [wjhbird@yahoo.com](mailto:wjhbird@yahoo.com)  
 Jeanette Tasey: 669-3169, [jtasey@gmail.com](mailto:jtasey@gmail.com)  
 Nancy Wiggins: 651-0218, [nwiggins83@gmail.com](mailto:nwiggins83@gmail.com)

**Montana's Congressional Delegation:**

Sen. Max Baucus: U.S. Senate, Wash. D.C. 20510  
website: <http://baucus.senate.gov>  
email: [max@baucus.senate.gov](mailto:max@baucus.senate.gov)  
Billings: 657-6790 Wash. D.C.: 1-800-332-6160  
Sen. Jon Tester: U.S. Senate, Wash. D.C. 20510  
website: <http://tester.senate.gov>  
email: [senator@tester.senate.gov](mailto:senator@tester.senate.gov)  
Billings: 252-0550 Wash. D.C.: 1-866-554-4403  
Rep. Steve Daines: U.S. House of Rep. Wash. D.C. 20515  
website: [www.rdianes.house.gov](http://www.rdianes.house.gov)  
email: [steve.daines@mail.house.gov](mailto:steve.daines@mail.house.gov)  
Wash. DC: 202-225-3211

### Committees and Special Assignments:

Archives and History.....open  
Audubon Adventures.....Jeannette Davis, 656-7618  
Bird Questions..... George Mowat, 656-7467 or  
Helen Carlson, 248-8684  
Christmas Bird Count.....Helen Carlson, 248-8684  
Conservation Chair.....Kayhan Ostovar, 256-7481,  
kayhan@q.com  
Editor.....Nancy Wiggins, 651-0218, nwiggins83@gmail.com  
Field Trip Chairs... George and Bernie Mowat, 656-7467,  
gmowat@bresnan.net  
Greeters...Phyllis Holt 252-7373, Audrey Jurovich 656-2748  
Injured Raptors...Jeanette Tasey 669-3169,jitasey@gmail.com  
Membership Secretary.....Joel M. Bowers, 534-3672,  
cell: 591-5635, jmba@jmba.com  
Program Chair.....Shelia McKay, 652-7175,  
wjhbird@yahoo.com  
Recycling (aluminum)...Larry Handsaker, 406-855-9832  
Website.... Tom Lyman, Tomglyman@gmail.com  
**Meetings** are held September through May at Mayflower Con-  
gregational Church, corner of Poly and Rehberg:

- Board Meetings held second Monday of each month at 6:00pm. Board Meetings are open to the entire membership.
- General Chapter Meetings are held third Monday of each month at 7:00pm. All meetings are open to the public.



## FIELD TRIP NOTES



Jerry Dalton winter wandering.....

Photo by George Mowat

### SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 9

#### WINTER WANDERINGS

Carolyn Jones and Sue Weinreis jump started the Winter Wanderings (progressive eating and birding) Fundraiser on February 9 with a scrumptious breakfast featuring Cody Cowgirl Casserole (to die for), homemade muffins (with real pumpkin), and fresh fruit (yummy). While savoring all the good food, we enjoyed birding out the picture window which featured Northern Flicker, House Sparrow, House Finch, and Black-capped Chickadee - plus one wayward squirrel who tried to steal the show.

A new stop for this field trip was Zimmerman Park, where everyone was thrilled to see cross bills!!! We saw Red Crossbill, White-breasted Nuthatch, American Robin, Downy Woodpecker and Black-billed Magpie. Zimmerman Park is a delight because you can look out over the rims and see the birds almost at eye level.

Deb and Steve Regele then hosted the group at their delightful home near Joliet. We saw oodles of Black-capped Chickadee, Downy Woodpecker, Black-eyed Junco, American Robin, lots of Cedar Waxwings, and House Finch. Deb treated us to delicious homemade cookies and gave us quick education on raising mealie worms and mason bees, while Steve and others were almost tempted to try out the pulley bridge across the creek. On route to and from the Regeles, we all saw Rough-legged and Red-tailed Hawks, and of course we had to top off the progressive eating with a delicious late lunch at the Owl Café.

Bill DeMeyer and Sheila McKay were unable to attend the wanderings because they were working hard at a Montana Audubon State Meeting in Helena. Not to totally miss out on the fun, they birded all the way to Helena and back, spotting Trumpeter Swans plus lots of Bald Eagles and Rough-legged Hawks.

THANKS to all who supported this fundraiser and fun day!!! And thank you to Rita Harding



## CITIZEN ACTION GUIDE TO THE MONTANA LEGISLATURE

The 2013 Montana Legislature began on January 7. Montana Audubon is serving as the main voice at the session supporting wildlife and wildlife habitats. A list of all the bills introduced can be found at [www.mtaudubon.org](http://www.mtaudubon.org). Click on 'issue and actions' and 'MT legislature'.

### LEGISLATIVE INFORMATION FROM NON-GOVERNMENT ORGANIZATIONS

- Montana Sportsmen's Alliance - <http://www.montanasporsmenalliance.com/2013-legislature>
- Montana Wildlife Federation - <http://www.montanawildlife.org>
- Northern Plains Resource Council - <http://www.northernplains.org/legislature>
- 

### HOW TO CONTACT A LEGISLATOR ABOUT A BILL OF CONCERN

The easiest and sometimes most effective method of contacting legislators is to call (406) 444-4800 (The Legislature Switchboard). You can leave messages for multiple legislators or for an entire committee. Your comments are delivered to each legislator. Once they have your contact information after you first call, it can take as little as a minute or two.



# SAVE THE DATE

**MARCH 21-24**

## **RIVERS AND WILDLIFE CELEBRATION SANDHILL CRANE FESTIVAL KEARNEY, NEBRASKA**

Organized by Audubon Nebraska, the annual festival brings together nature enthusiasts from across the country to witness the migration of over half a million sandhill cranes and millions of waterfowl and other birds through central Nebraska. Events include guided field trips to local birding hotspots; the Wild Experience Room with live raptor and reptile presentations on Saturday; and daily visits to river blinds operated by Audubon's Rowe Sanctuary for up-close views of cranes roosting on the Platte River. Key speakers are author and rancher Dan O'Brien and photographer Noppadol Paothong. For more information, visit <http://nebraskacranefestival.org/>, email [nebraska@audubon.org](mailto:nebraska@audubon.org) or call 402-797-2301.

Editor's note: Even if you can't visit during the time of the Festival, the sandhills are there for the watching for several weeks before and after the highlighted dates. Visit the website and be sure to visit the cranes in Kearney!

## **JUNE 7-9 14TH ANNUAL WINGS ACROSS THE BIG SKY FESTIVAL 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. One of only ten cities nationwide selected to receive an Urban Conservation Treaty for Migratory Birds grant, the Lewistown community and surrounding areas are gearing up to welcome birders to the region.

"The Urban Bird Treaty program, administered by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, brings together private citizens, as well as federal, state, and municipal agencies and non-governmental organizations to conserve migratory birds through education programs, participation in citizen science, conservation and habitat improvement strategies, and reduction of hazards to birds in urban/suburban areas."

Keynote speaker Susan Bonfield of the International Migratory Bird Day and Environment for the Americas will share with us a glimpse into the Western Hummingbird Partnership and the world of hummingbirds. [Note the change in schedule for speaker John Marzluff. He will join us for the 15th Annual Wings Across the Big Sky Festival in Bozeman.]

Experience Central Montana and all this landscape has to offer, either through festival field trips or your own exploration. There will be an art workshop, tours of the historic Lewistown and its architecture, and other things to do for those who choose to remain at the hotel during field trip outings. Lewistown has wonderful fishing too. Bring your rod and reel along with your binoculars! Some sights and sounds of Lewistown include:

- 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!

**Registration will open on March 6, 2013! Visit [mtaudubon.org](http://mtaudubon.org) for more information.**





## Events at the Audubon Conservation Education Center Winter 2013

7026 South Billings Blvd, Billings, MT, 59101, 406-294-5099, [www.mtacec.org](http://www.mtacec.org)

**March 4** Hands-on Home school Science class at the Audubon Center: Scientific Method – we'll build a foundation for scientific discovery through experimentation. Call 294 – 5099 to register, \$10/child.

**March 8** Nature Night at the Audubon Center! Drop your child off for an evening of outdoor adventures with our Teacher Naturalists. Program is open to K – 6th grade students, and runs from 6 – 8 PM. Fee is \$15 per child or \$10 for Friends of the Center. For more info and a registration form, visit [www.mtacec.org](http://www.mtacec.org) or call 294 – 5099.

**March 11** Hands-on Home school Science Class at the Audubon Center: Nature Sleuth – there's a mystery at hand. We'll figure it out using the scientific method. Call 294 – 5099 to register, \$10/child

**March 17** Weekend Wonders Family Program from 1:30 – 3PM: Wacky Science – got cabin fever? Then come down and get wacky with our naturalists as you make silly putty, mini-hovercrafts, exploding volcanoes, and other crazy projects! Register by calling the Audubon Center at 294 – 5099, \$2/person.

**March 18** Hands-on Home school Science Class at the Audubon Center: Electricity – examine electricity through hands-on discoveries. Call 294 – 5099 to register, \$10/child

**March 25** Hands-on Home school Science Class at the Audubon Center: Microscopic – explore the little stuff through the lens of a microscope. Call 294 – 5099 to register, \$10/child.

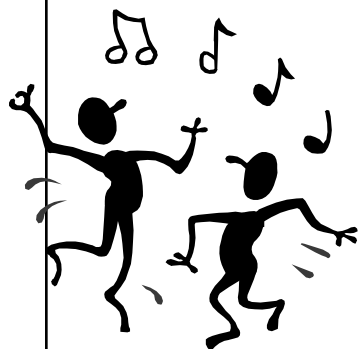


## NESTING MATERIALS

Today Health Professions Press announced the release of Bird Tales (<http://ow.ly/htPz0>), a low cost, high-impact program to improve the lives of people living with Alzheimer's disease. The program was developed by dementia-care expert Randy Griffin in partnership with the National Audubon Society, Toyota, and TransCon. Bird Tales: A Program for Engaging People with Dementia through the Natural World of Birds, (Health Professions Press, \$89.95), includes a program guide and educational DVD that take long-term care professionals and community organizations step-by-step through simple ways of improving the outdoor spaces of residential care communities and promoting environmentally conscious practices while helping residents interact with their environment.

These are some wonderful websites to visit for some indoor birding on a chilly winter day:

- **Staggering Stats: Cats Kill Billions of Animals a Year** LiveScience.com January 29, 2013  
[www.livescience.com/26670-cats-kill-billions-animals.html](http://www.livescience.com/26670-cats-kill-billions-animals.html)
- **Birding Workshops With David Sibley** <http://pinebutteguestranch.com/workshops/birding-with-david-allen-sibley/>
- **Hummingbirds in the garden the beauty of pollinatio** <http://www.youtube-nocookie.com/embed/xHkq1edcbk4?rel=0>
- **How Birds Got Their UV Vision** <http://www.livescience.com/26994-how-birds-uv-vision.html>
- **New kind of extinct flying reptile** <http://earthsky.org> (search title)
- **She is described as awesome.** And wonderful. And maybe a little weird. She is the world's oldest known living wild bird at age 62, and she produced a healthy chick that hatched Sunday.  
[www.washingtonpost.com](http://www.washingtonpost.com) (search Albatross named Wisdom)
- **When Squirrels Attack Your Feeder** [www.audubonaction.org](http://www.audubonaction.org)



## YVAS CONSERVATION GRANT WINNERS

The Board of Directors is so pleased to announce the winners of the YVAS 2012-2013 Conservation Grant. The Grant is awarded to educational institutions, groups or individuals for a project that meets the YVAS mission "to promote enjoyment and protection of the natural environment through education, activism and conservation of bird habitat".

We look forward to each grantee reporting on the results of their project at a YVAS membership meeting upon its completion. Congratulations to:

- **Girl Scouts of Montana and Wyoming:** \$650 to sponsor 2nd and 3rd grade Brownies in the project 'WOW Wonders of Water'.
- **Hysham High School:** \$500 for a project designed to monitor activity of the red-headed woodpecker.
- **Matthew Light:** \$264 for his Eagle Scout Merit Badge project of fence marking to reduce collisions for sage-grouse and other birds.

## DONATION REQUEST FOR BOOKS AND BINOCULARS

- ◇ Do you have binoculars that you no longer use sitting around gathering dust?
- ◇ Do you have field guides that have been replaced by newer versions?
- ◇ Would you be interested in donating them?

YVAS has awarded a conservation grant to Hysham High school above. However, we could not fund the binoculars and field guides they requested, and are hoping that we can fill that need with donated items. If you have working binoculars or field guides, please call Dorothy Bartlett at 252-0757 or bring them to a Chapter meeting. There are a number of groups who could use them!



## NEW MAPS FOR YOUR BIRDING PLEASURE

### YELLOWSTONE RIVER BIRDING AND CONSERVATION PROJECT SITES

NEW! EXCELLENT, updated maps and bird lists for the 2012 YVAS Yellowstone River Birding and Conservation Project Sites are available. These were prepared by Cameron Sapp, Kayhan Ostovar, and Lucas Ward from Rocky Mountain College, in cooperation with Steve Regele, George Mowat, and Brad Hall from YVAS. These maps will lend a whole new dimension to your birding experience in our area.

- Go to: <http://www.yvaudubon.org/publications.htm>
- Click on Yellowstone River Birding and Conservation Project for the Project description
- Click on the following for the updated YRBCP maps and site specific 2012 bird lists:
  - ⇒ **YNP Yellowstone River Headwaters**
  - ⇒ **Gray Bear Fishing Access**
  - ⇒ **Two Moon Park**
  - ⇒ **Isaac Homestead Howrey Island Complex**
  - ⇒ **Yellowstone-Missouri Confluence**

See the February Flyer, p4, for a recent summary of the YVAS YRBC Project.

National Audubon Society  
Recruitment Code: C0ZN500Z  
Application for New Membership

Please enroll me as a member of the National Audubon Society. I understand that I will receive the Audubon Magazine and Yellowstone Valley Audubon Society Flyer. Make check payable to **National Audubon Society**.  
\*Renewals will be sent to you through National Audubon.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_

State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address \_\_\_\_\_

One Year Membership

☐ \$20 One year new membership

Send this application and your check made out to **National Audubon Society** to:

Yellowstone Valley Audubon Society  
Attention: Membership Secretary  
P.O. Box 1075  
Billings, MT 59103-1075

Yellowstone Valley Audubon Society  
Recruitment Code: C0ZN500Z  
Application for New & Renewal Membership

Please enroll me as a supporting member of Yellowstone Valley Audubon Society. I understand I will be supporting local chapter activities and receiving the local newsletter. I will enjoy full Chapter benefits. Make check payable to **Yellowstone Valley Audubon Society** for \$20. If applying for a new or renewing student membership, make check for \$10 and indicate academic affiliation.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_

State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address \_\_\_\_\_

Do you want to receive the Flyer electronically?

☐ YES ☐ NO

Send this application and your check to:

Yellowstone Valley Audubon Society  
Attention: Membership Secretary  
P.O. Box 1075  
Billings, MT 59103-1075



**WHOOPS!!**

**Is it time for you to become a YVAS member or renew your chapter membership?**

PLEASE CHECK THE MAILING LABEL ON YOUR FLYER. IF IT SHOWS "YVAS JAN 12" BELOW YOUR NAME, THEN YOU ARE A SUPPORTING CHAPTER MEMBER WHOSE MEMBERSHIP EXPIRED IN JANUARY 2012. IF YOU ARE NOT A SUPPORTING MEMBER OR YOUR MEMBERSHIP HAS EXPIRED, HELP US OUT BY JOINING OR RENEWING NOW WITH YOUR CHECK FOR \$20, USING THE FORM ON THE RIGHT. YOUR MEMBERSHIP HELPS FUND THE PUBLICATION OF THE FLYER ALONG WITH OTHER ACTIVITIES RELATED TO THE MANAGEMENT OF OUR CHAPTER.

**Membership Information**

Although the National Audubon Society gives complimentary membership in our chapter as a benefit, no dues come to us. We strongly encourage you to join YVAS as a Supporting Chapter Member, which is offered for \$20 a year. Use the application form above to join as a Supporting Chapter Member or to renew your Chapter Membership.

1. **Moving???** Let us know as early as possible when you plan to move. The Post Office does charge us a fee for returned flyers. Include your old address as well as your new address so we can track you. You may write, call, or email the information to the Membership Secretary.
2. Yellowstone Valley Audubon Society offers Supporting Chapter student memberships for a reduced rate of \$10 a year. If you applying for a new student membership or are renewing a student membership, make sure you indicate your academic affiliation in your application. Joel Bowers, Membership Secretary



**YELLOWSTONE VALLEY  
AUDUBON FLYER**

P.O. Box 1075  
Billings, MT 59103-1075

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

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## Field Trip Calendar:

All field trips depart from Rocky Mountain College parking lot on Rimrock Road, adjacent to Billings Studio Theater, unless otherwise noted, and will be by car. All field trips are open to the public. Passengers will share gas costs with

<b>Apr 13</b>	<b>Sat</b>	<b>EXXON PONDS AND EMERALD HILLS. 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.</b>	Sack lunch. <b><u>One Mile Walk.</u></b>
<b>May 4</b>	<b>Sat</b>	<b>LAKE BASIN 8 a.m.</b>	Sack lunch. Mike Weber, leader
<b>May 11</b>	<b>Sat</b>	<b>MEET AT RIVERFRONT PARK, S Billings Blvd, 1st parking area on right, at 8:00 a.m. Half day.</b>	George and Bernie Mowat, leaders.
<b>May 16</b>	<b>Thur</b>	<b>MEET AT RIVERFRONT PARK. 5:30 p.m.(See location above)</b>	Mike Weber, leader.
<b>May 18</b>	<b>Sat</b>	<b>STILLWATER AND WOODBINE AREAS. 7 a.m. to 5 p.m.</b>	Sack lunch. Ruth Vanderhorst, leader.
<b>May 25</b>	<b>Sat</b>	<b>POMPEY'S PILLAR. 7 a.m. to early afternoon.</b>	Sack lunch optional. Ruth Vanderhorst, leader.
<b>June 4</b>	<b>Tues</b>	<b>MEET AT PICTOGRAPH CAVE. 5:30 p.m. exit i-90 at Lockwood (Exit 452) and turn onto Coburn Road</b>	Ruth Vanderhorst, leader

