



*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 46, NUMBER 8

SEPTEMBER 2016

## **La Noche Cubana** The Birds of Cuba Presentation by YVAS members who traveled to Cuba in 2016

Monday, September 19, 2016 at 7PM



YVAS members Ruth Vanderhorst, Rita Harding, Bob & Carolyn Jones, Sue Weinreis and Trenay Hart were fortunate to have the opportunities to travel to Cuba this year. There were 3 separate trips among the 5 members who traveled to Cuba. Please join them in a photographic exploration of the birds of Cuba for the September Chapter meeting.

Twenty-four of the 26 known endemic birds of Cuba were observed. Along with the endemic birds many other fascinating species from the West Indies were seen for a total of 152 species on one of the tours.

The pre-meeting potluck fundraiser for this month will be a special dinner hosted by the Cuban Tourists featuring a traditional Cuban menu: Ropa Vieja (shredded beef) The National dish of Cuba, Moros y Critianos (black beans and rice), Salada Cubana & Tropical fruits, Flan and Virgin Pina Coladas. *Above photo: Cuban Trogon courtesy of Bob Jones.*

## **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, September 12 , 6:00pm: Board of Directors Meeting**

**Monday, September 19, 7:00pm: Chapter Meeting**

**We will hold a YVAS fundraiser dinner at 5:30, before the Chapter meeting. Dinner donation: \$6. Sue Weinreis and the Cuban tourists have generously volunteered to host (see details above). Please contact her at 855-4181 [before Friday, Sept. 16](https://www.facebook.com/Yellowstone-Valley-Audubon-Society-504343829741848/) to make reservations.**

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

**And Facebook! <https://www.facebook.com/Yellowstone-Valley-Audubon-Society-504343829741848/>**

Updates from the Board will begin again after September as for now most of the Board is off in some remote Montana town lounging around and supposedly looking for birds. The group in Malta, MT during Bowdoin field trip.

*Photo courtesy of Robert Hill*



### Yellowstone Valley Audubon Society Officers:

#### AREA CODE 406

**President:** Steve Regele, 962-3115, sregele@juno.com

**Vice-President:** OPEN

**Secretary:** Doreen Hartman, 697-0277, rdzlh-man@bresnan.net

**Treasurer:** Pam Pipal, 245-4517, ppipal@charter.net

#### Board of Directors:

Donn Bartlett: 252-0757, donnbartlett@msn.com

Dorothy Bartlett, 252-0757, dpadanyi@live.com

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Sheila McKay: 652-7175, cell 694-7918, wjhbird@yahoo.com

Deb Regele: 962-3115, debregele@gmail.com

Sue Weinreis: 855-4181, granpeak47@gmail.com

Nancy Wiggins: 651-0218, nwiggins83@gmail.com

#### Montana's Congressional Delegation:

Sen. Steve Daines: U.S. Senate, Wash. D.C. 20510

website: [daines.senate.gov](http://daines.senate.gov)

email: to email Senator Daines you must go to his website.

Billings: 406-245-6822 Wash. D.C. 202-224-2651

Sen. Jon Tester: U.S. Senate, Wash. D.C. 20510

website: [tester.senate.gov](http://tester.senate.gov)

email: [senator@tester.senate.gov](mailto:senator@tester.senate.gov)

Billings: 406-252-0550 Wash. D.C.: 202-224-2644

Rep. Ryan Zinke:

website: [zinke.house.gov](http://zinke.house.gov)

email: to email Representative Zinke you must go to his website.

Billings: 406-702-1182 Wash, D.C: 202-225-3211

### Committees and Special Assignments: AREA CODE 406

Audubon Adventures: Jerry Dalton, daltonlj@centurylink.net

Baling Twine Project: Lisa Bessasparis, ospreybtc@gmail.com

Bird Questions: George Mowat, 656-7467 gbmowat@gmail.com  
or Helen Carlson Cummins, 248-8684

Birdathon: Ruth Vanderhorst, 245-5118, erv132@charter.net

Christmas Bird Count: Jim Court, 259-5099, C: 860-0450,  
custertours@gmail.com

Conservation Advisor: Steve Regele, 962-3115, sregele@juno.com

Data Base Administrator: Joel M. Bowers, 534-3672,

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Facebook: Nancy Wiggins, 651-0218, nwiggins83@gmail.com

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Field Trip Chair: Donn Bartlett, 252-0757, donnbartlett@msn.com

Hospitality: Audrey Jurovich, 656-2748

Injured Raptors: Montana Raptor Conservation Center, 406-585-1211; Raptor Transport Jeanette Tasey 669-3169,  
jtasey@gmail.com

Membership Committee Chair: Dorothy Bartlett, 252-0757,  
dpadanyi@live.com

Osprey Project: Deb Regele, 962-3115, debregele@gmail.com

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Program Committee: Steve Regele, 962-3115, sregele@juno.com,  
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Recycling (aluminum): Larry Handsaker, 855-9832,  
918 AVE C, Billings

Website: Deb Regele, 962-3115, debregele@gmail.com

**Meetings** are held September through May at Mayflower Congregational Church, corner of Poly and Rehberg, Billings, MT:

- Board Meetings are held the second Monday of each month at 6:00pm. Board Meetings are open to all members.

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



**Saturday, August 6 Shorebirds, Hawks, & Prairie Birds***Submitted by Will Crain*

A group of 10 birders left Rocky Mountain College and headed for the Broadview Ponds. Prior to reaching the destination we stopped along HWY 3 and counted 23 Burrowing Owls. The total species count for the day was 33. We saw Red-necked Phalarope, Wilson's Snipe, and feeding in mud flats on the pond were Greater Yellowlegs and Semipalmated Sandpipers. In the distance, across the pond were White-faced Ibis and Eared Grebes. Several hawks were seen around the pond but the raptor of the day was a Merlin who stirred up flocks of birds off the pond. After leaving the pond we weren't disappointed to find a Great Horned Owl in a big old tree nearby. The one less common bird that provided a thrill was the Upland Sandpiper out on the plains. Thanks to Mike Weber for leading a perfect day of birding. Photos from left to right, White-faced Ibis with American Avocet, Wilson's Snipe and a flock of Spotted Sandpipers. *Photos by Will Crain*

**Fri-Sun August 19-21 BOWDOIN NWR, NELSON RESERVOIR AND ZORTMAN CAMPGROUND***Submitted by Pam Pipal*

Twelve avid birders headed north for Bowdoin NWR on Friday morning and spotted several species along the way including Hawks, American Kestrel, and Sandhill Cranes. Besides the avian sightings, Ruth Vanderhorst, Lois Gorseth, and Pam Pipal caught sight of a Bobcat going for roadkill on the side of the highway.

We stopped for lunch and birding at James Kipp Recreation Area and saw several species, including White-breasted Nuthatch, Lazuli Bunting, Western Tanager, American Redstart, Warbling Vireo, Red-eyed Vireo, both a Hairy and Downy Woodpeckers, and many Eastern Kingbirds.

Before our final destination we stopped at Nelson Reservoir, and hit a bonanza of waterfowl and shorebirds. Of note were the Common Loon; American Avocet; White-faced Ibis; 3 kinds of Gulls, Franklin, California, and Ring-billed; Caspian and Common Terns; Stilt Sandpipers; and on-shore, Bullock's Oriole and thanks to Dorothy Bartlett, 4 nestling Barn Swallows in a grove of trees.

Safely checked in for the night at Malta, the birding wasn't over, with sightings of Common Nighthawks and Chimney Swifts right from the motel parking lot.

On Saturday we headed to Bowdoin NWR and saw species too numerous to mention in this accounting. The highlight of the day, by far, was due to Lois Gorseth's persistence in getting our attention, Brian Henderson's reaction of "holy cow!", and Peter Cummins' identification, of a Harlequin Duck. (See Brian Henderson's photo of the Harlequin Duck on the cover of this month's Flyer.) Other highlights were a Virginia Rail, 2 Sora, a side-water collection of hundreds of Long-billed and Short-billed Dowitchers, some Red-necked Phalaropes, and on-shore a rare Pine Warbler, a Wilson's Warbler, and 2 Baltimore Orioles.

Sunday we took off early to get to Zortman Campground. Between the main highway and the campground many Mountain Bluebirds were seen. At the campground among the species seen were Ovenbirds, Red-breasted Nuthatch, Swainson's Thrush, and Common Yellowthroat.

Many thanks to Ruth for her leadership and expertise, and to Brian for expertise and e-bird listings. And thanks to the birders who shared their spotting scope sightings with the rest of us!

Total species for the trip: 123, including 3 indeterminate of the duck, teal, and peep variety!

## 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. **PLEASE DO NOT BRING PETS.** All field trips are open to the public. Passengers will share gas costs with driver when car-pooling. Do make sure you check all field trips with listing in Flyer each month for any changes. Binoculars and birding books are available on loan at the field trips  
FIELD TRIP CHAIR: Donn Bartlett 252-0757, [donnbartlett@msn.com](mailto:donnbartlett@msn.com)

Sept 8	Thurs	<b>Fall migrants.</b> Meet at Riverfront Park, S. Billings Blvd. 1 <sup>st</sup> parking area on the right. 5:00 pm	Mike Weber, leader.
Sept 17	Sat	<b>Pryor Mountains</b>	Meet at 7:00 am at Rocky Mountain College for carpooling or 8:00 am at Bridger Rest Stop.  Sack lunch. Ruth Vanderhorst and Stan Heath, leaders.
Sept 24 *date change	Sat	<b>Clark Fork WMA-Blue Water Fish Hatchery-Fromberg.</b>  8:00 am to 6:00 pm	Sack lunch. Steve Regele and George Mowat, leaders.
Nov 5	Sat	<b>Yellowtail Dam Afterbay.</b>  8:00 am to 6:00 pm.	Sack lunch. George Mowat, leader.
Dec 18	Sun	<b>Annual Christmas Bird Count</b>	Jim Court, leader. <a href="mailto:custertours@gmail.com">custertours@gmail.com</a> 259-5099



### Evening Under the Big Sky

Montana Audubon Center's: Annual Fundraising Event



Montana Audubon formally invites Yellowstone Valley Audubon Society members to attend the Center's annual fundraiser, Evening Under the Big Sky. Join fellow bird enthusiasts and members of the Billings community on Saturday evening, September 17 to celebrate the success of place-based nature education at the Montana Audubon Center. The event begins at 5:00 pm and will take place on the Center grounds, located at 7026 South Billings Blvd.

Education programs at the Center expanded during the past 12 months, consistent with an eight-year growth trend. More than 5,000 people of all ages and backgrounds participated in nature education programming at our Billings location. The Center's flagship program, Audubon Naturalists in the Schools (ANTS), reached 38 fourth-grade classrooms during the 2015-2016 school year. Twelve new classrooms will join the program this fall. Center staff also launched the pilot year of the Fledglings Nature Preschool in 2015; the wait-listed program will expand to 5 days a week this fall.

Evening Under the Big Sky is an opportunity for YVAS members to help celebrate these successes and more. The evening will feature live bluegrass music from some of Billings' most well-known musicians, and local food and beverages will be served. The festive fundraiser will include a silent auction and live auction games to benefit our education and restoration programs. We hope to see you and look forward to your continued support.

Registration is online, [www.mtaudubon.org/center/eubs2016](http://www.mtaudubon.org/center/eubs2016) or by calling (406) 294-5099. Tickets are \$75 each or \$550 for a table that seats 8.

*Submitted by Jonathan E. Lutz, MAC Director*

### Osprey Platform

As the end of August approaches, most of this year's young Ospreys have fledged. I would not be surprised if a few of the Osprey nest monitors are quietly saying to themselves, it's about time! This year there were upwards of 120 Osprey nestlings observed along the Yellowstone River and that is only from those nests we know exist. However, some of these nests did not succeed, some nestlings were lost to predation, and some were lost to severe storms and some to unknown causes.

Earlier this month, Marco reported to the monitors that he banded more nestlings this year than in previous years along the Yellowstone River. This year topped out at 83 for a total of 287 Osprey nestlings since 2012. Nest montitors also watch for banded Osprey's that have returned to breed. This years hatch will be back roughly in 2019 to challenge the monitors' abilities to read numbers on the bands.

Thank you to all YVAS Osprey Nest Monitors for your support and assistance with this project. Without your data, banding and data for the Montana Natural Heritage Program would not be possible. Thank you to the companies with bucket trucks that assisted Marco with the banding.

*Submitted by Deb Regele*

### Now Available on the YVAS Website

Have you ever wondered where to go birding in Billings? Have you ever wondered what birds other people are seeing? Well, take a look on the YVAS website! Under 'Birding', click on 'Birding Hot Spots & Bird Lists' for the links.

There are maps of birding locations in the Billings area and in eastern Montana. Thanks to local birders and eBird, there are now Bird Lists for local birding hot spots in our area. As time allows, Bird Lists for other areas will be added. Keep checking back for more!

*Submitted by Deb Regele*

### CREATIVE CORNER

#### SWALLOWS

A Poem by Leonora Speyer

They dip their wings in the sunset,  
They dash against the air  
As if to break themselves upon its stillness:  
In every movement, too swift to count,  
Is a revelry of indecision,  
A furtive delight in trees they do not desire  
And in grasses that shall not know their  
weight.

They hover and lean toward the meadow  
With little edged cries;  
And then,  
As if frightened at the earth's nearness,  
They seek the high austerity of evening sky  
And swirl into its depth.



*Poem at left submitted by Jim Sells, Photo above of Tree Swallow bringing food to fledgling by Will Crain.*



Brown Pelicans,  
Naples, Florida.

*Photo by YVAS  
Board member  
Steve Linder.*

*Yellowstone Valley Audubon Society 2015-2016*

Borrowing from Webster and Wiktionary a Society is defined, in part, as *“An enduring and cooperating voluntary association of individuals for common ends; especially an organized group working together or periodically meeting because of common interests, beliefs, or profession. The sum total of all voluntary interrelations between individuals that deliberate, determine and act toward a common goal.”*

I like that. And I really like the well-crafted YVAS Mission Statement *“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.”*

I remind myself of the YVAS purpose and Mission throughout each year that I have been involved with YVAS. I and the YVAS Board of Directors thoughtfully evaluate what and how we and other YVAS members are doing in light of that Mission. I thought it worthwhile to summarize some of the work our Society has done in our 2015-2016 ‘season’. Please take a look at the list and brief description of this work at the “About Us” tab at <http://www.yvaudubon.org/>. I hope it helps all of us recall why we belong here and what is accomplished by YVAS members contributing to the YVAS Mission.

*Submitted by Steve Regele*

**Yellowstone Valley Audubon Society****Annual Report of YVAS Funds**

**July 1, 2015 - June 30, 2016**

	<b>Operating Fund</b>	<b>Aud. Adv. Fund</b>	<b>Osprey Fund</b>	<b>Yellowstone River Fund</b>	<b>Gen. Proj. Fund*</b>	<b>Endow. Fund</b>	<b>BCF Endow. Fund 1/</b>
<b>Balance on 7-1-15</b>	<b>14,875</b>	<b>2,243</b>	<b>5,613</b>	<b>1,744</b>	<b>13,186</b>	<b>1,199</b>	<b>41,001</b>
Revenue	8,130	75	1,139	0	4,621	12,374	3,292
Expenses	(4,810)	(318)	(207)	0	(7,197)	(13,573)	(1,398)
<b>Balance on 6-30-16</b>	<b>18,195</b>	<b>2,000</b>	<b>6,545</b>	<b>1,744</b>	<b>10,610</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>42,895</b>

**TOTAL OF ALL YVAS FUNDS:                      \$   81,989.00**

**\*General Projects Fund includes:****OSPREY PROJECTS**

Osprey Rescue Fund                      \$   2,722.30

**CONSERVATION PROJECTS**

Conservation Grant                      410.00

Unspecified Conservation Projects                      140.00

Clark's Fork WMA                      295.07

**SPECIAL PROGRAMS**

Holiday Fundraiser                      1,398.18

**EDUCATION**

Rose Sylling Trust                      3,954.18

Birdathon                      1,690.00

**TOTAL    \$   10,609.73**

1/ does not include the \$10,166 June 2016 deposit that will be reflected in the next Annual Report. Revenue is actually new deposits to the fund from YVAS and Expenses are the fund increase/decrease other than the new deposits.



The YVAS Board of Directors is trying to find a better way to alert supporting Chapter Members of their renewal dates. The list below consists of those members up for renewal in SEPTEMBER. Please use the application form below (include your email address) and submit it, along with a check, to any Board Member or mail it to the address on the application when it is time to renew. Contact Membership Secretary Joel M. Bowers at 406-534-3672 or [membership.data@yvaudubon.org](mailto:membership.data@yvaudubon.org), with any questions.

## SEPTEMBER Renewals:

David & Ruth Torrence, Nancy Auren, Lisa Bessasparis,  
Ann Shesne, Steven Evans, Vern & Sharon Martinz.



Don't miss out on  
seeing all the photos  
in this Flyer in full  
color on the website:

[yvaudubon.org](http://yvaudubon.org)



*Photos by Bob Jones*  
taken during Osprey  
Banding this season. At  
left is Carolyn Jones  
and her grandson, at  
right is Helen Carlson.

Thanks to Dr. Marco  
Restani for generously  
allowing the Osprey  
Nest Monitors these  
photo opportunities for  
all their hard work!



**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 (electronically), 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  
P.O. Box 1075  
Billings, MT 59103-1075

**Yellowstone Valley Audubon Society**  
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 family 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  
P.O. Box 1075  
Billings, MT 59103-1075



**YELLOWSTONE VALLEY  
AUDUBON FLYER**

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

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Harlequin Duck, Bowdoin NWR field trip, see article on page 2. *Photo by Brian Henderson*

**Bird of the Month Eastern Screech-Owl**



*Photo by Karen Heil from her yard in Edgar, MT*

With an attention getting mysterious trill in the night, this spooky sound comes from an owl no bigger than a pint glass. Common east of the Rockies, the Eastern Screech-Owl is found wherever there are trees. Supremely camouflaged birds hide out in tree crannies during the day, so listen for them at night. *Adapted from All About Birds website.*

This Eastern Screech-Owl located by member Karen Heil, using careful eyes, in her own backyard in Edgar, MT in early August. We should ask her if she first heard the bird at night!