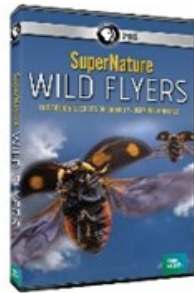


Mission: Building on the tradition of special interest in birds, Yellowstone Valley Audubon Society is organized to promote enjoyment and protection of the natural environment through education, activism, and conservation of bird habitat.

VOLUME 46, NUMBER 11/12

NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 2016



CHAPTER MEETING

MONDAY NOVEMBER 21 AT 7:00P

DON'T MISS THIS PBS FAMILY-FASCINATING FILM: WILD FLYERS

The sky is one of the world's most challenging places to live, but across the planet an extraordinary range of animals do something we can only dream of – take to the air. Some spend their whole lives airborne, others only visit – but they all have one thing in common; they only survive by taking to the skies. This film will reveal the incredible adaptations; tactics and brand new discoveries that explain how these animals have mastered the sky and why they all need it to survive. Shown with permission. Open to the community, no admission fee. Join us at Mayflower Congregational Church, Poly and Rehberg, Billings, MT.

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.

Tuesday, November 15 (postponed one week for elections), 6:00pm: Board of Directors Meeting, December Board Meeting is Dec. 20, 6pm.

Monday, November 21, 7:00pm: Chapter Meeting. December Meeting announcement page 4.

We will hold a YVAS fundraiser dinner at 5:30, before the Chapter meeting. Dinner donation: \$6. This month is a No-Host Potluck. Please bring a dish to share for 6-8 persons. Call Sue Weinreis to let her know your dish contribution at 855-4181 by Friday, November 18.

THIS FLYER IS PUBLISHED ON Sustainable Forestry Initiative SFI.org CERTIFIED PRODUCT

☞We're on the web! yvaudubon.org

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

The Board of Directors of Yellowstone Valley Audubon held its monthly meeting October 11, 2016. Points of discussion from the September and October meetings were as follows:

Steve Linder has assumed the position of Vice President on the YVAS Board. He and Steve Regele have been investigating conservation and education projects.

Deb Regele reported that the 2016 Osprey Project is mostly complete and most reports are in. The annual Osprey Picnics were held September 10 in Billings, and October 1 for the Livingston area watchers

The Board discussed a collaboration with Yellowstone River Conservation District Council to apply for a grant for the establishment of a location and facility to store baling twine for recycling. Due to the scope and commitment required for a project of this magnitude, Deb Regele and Doreen Hartman agreed to investigate further. It is critical to find a location that is large enough and convenient for drop-off and pick-up of the twine. They are looking for assistance and volunteers from the YVAS membership.

Don Bartlett reported that Powell, Wyoming birders want to partner with us on joint birding trip. The Birding Trip Committee will be working with them to select a birding area and leader.

Steve Regele reported that the Program Committee has a full slate of programs for the 2016-17 year, with several special presentations being considered as well.

The Board discussed consulting with an expert in advertising and public relations to promote special presentations. Steve Regele pointed out that we have excellent meetings, birding trips, and conservation projects, and they need to be publicized better. Dorothy Barton will follow up with a member who has expressed interest in helping YVAS and has a background in publicity.

The November chapter meeting will be preceded by a no-host Potluck dinner. Donations will be solicited to help defray the cost of the facility.

Sue Weinreis will coordinate a Christmas Dessert potluck to be held prior to the Christmas program.

Looking for a way to get more involved in YVAS? Membership Coordinator: contact Steve Regele, 406-962-3115

Baling Twine Committee: contact Deb Regele, 406-962-3115 or Doreen Hartman, 406-697-0277 Host a chapter dinner: contact Sue Weinreis, 406-855-4181

Submitted by Sue Weinreis

Yellowstone Valley Audubon Society Officers:

AREA CODE 406

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

Vice-President: Steve Linder, 380-0073, becon1@bresnan.net

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

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

email: senator@daines.senate.gov

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

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

website: tester.senate.gov

email: senator@tester.senate.gov

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

Rep. Ryan Zinke:

website: zinke.house.gov

email: representative@zinke.house.gov

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: Deb Regele, debregele@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,

C: 591-5635, membership.data@yvaudubon.org

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

Flyer Editor: Trenay Hart, 860-1175, yvasflyer@gmail.com

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

Publicity: Barbara Garrett, 652-3180, farrettimprisonart@gmail.com

Program Committee: Steve Regele, 962-3115, sregele@juno.com,
Nancy Wiggins, 651-0218, nwiggins83@gmail.com,
Sheila McKay, 652-7175, wjhbird@yahoo.com

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 Tuesday 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.

There were no official Field Trips in October, however, *Mike Weber submitted* the following notes regarding a recent trip to Lake Mason, near Roundup, MT:

I dreamed about a day at the beach for weeks, and I thought a trip to Lake Mason would fulfill my longing for some time in the sun, the wind and the water. I traded my bathing suit for winter wear and was joined by a couple of birding buddies, Will Crain and Brain Henderson.

We were met on the South border of Lake Mason NWR by an adult Ferruginous Hawk perched on a utility pole which turned out to be a talisman for the day. The last mile to the lake the gumbo road was rutted and muddy and by the time we neared the lakes edge I felt fortunate to not to have gotten stuck!

The lake was filled with many waterfowl with large rafts of American Coots numbering in the hundreds. In the NW corner of the lake were a handful of Tundra Swans, all adults. A half-dozen Sandhill Cranes flapped just on the horizon. Canvasbacks were the most numerous divers along with a few Redheads, Buffleheads and Ring-necked Ducks. Ruddy Ducks hung with Grebes, both Western and Eared. Many of the dabbling ducks were already transforming from brown August ducks to their spring colors. Mallards, Gadwall, American Wigeon and Northern Shoveler's familiar field marks were beginning to pop.

Very near us along the waters edge and mudflats was a large flock of busily feeding Long-billed Dowitchers. I tried counting each one and lost track at 252. Among them was a very diminutive sparrow sized shorebird with yellow legs, a Least Sandpiper. Initially, we thought we had seen a few Baird's Sandpipers but we noted the stronger contrast between the heavily streaked breast and the white belly and the yellow legs, and the overall heavier looking bill and felt grateful to observe four Pectoral Sandpipers instead. The Baird's Sandpipers have dark legs unlike the birds we observed. At least two dozen Greater Yellowlegs fed in the shallow water. Numerous Killdeer called and scurried about and a dozen Avocet milled in belly deep water a quarter mile to the West.

Flocks of American Pipits and Horned Larks flew nervously around calling and briefly pausing on the mudflats before taking to the air. We were lucky to see a couple of Lapland Longspur's with the flocks. A late migrant Vesper Sparrow paused in some greasewood. An adult Bald Eagle stirred the ducks into the air. A Northern Harrier dive bombed ducks in the middle of the lake. A lone Common Raven flew in silence high overhead.

None of us wanted this day to end we enjoyed watching all the birds and soaking in the atmosphere. I became mesmerized by the simple beauty of this quiet refuge. A refuge not only for birds but birders, too.

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

Nov 5	Sat	Yellowtail Dam Afterbay. 8:00 am to 6:00 pm.	Sack lunch. George Mowat, leader.
Dec 18	Sun	Annual Christmas Bird Count	Jim Court, leader. custertours@gmail.com 259-5099
Jan 1, 2017	Sun	New Year's Day Field Trip to Yellowtail Dam Afterbay 8:00 am to 6:00 pm	Sack lunch. George Mowat, leader.
Jan 7, 2017	Sat	Annual Eagle Midwinter Survey in lower 48 states. 8:00 am to 5:00 pm	Yellowstone River, Billings to Columbus. No host lunch. George Mowat, leader.



NEW 2016 and beyond FEATURE: In order to encourage additional but unscheduled outings, please call or email Donn Bartlett (see below) with the needed information such as time, route, etc. and I will forward it to interested area birders. These birders have provided me with their contact information to be used in these situations. donnbartlett@msn.com or 252-0757.

The above submission by Mike Weber is an excellent example of adding field trips that weren't formally organized. Please, anyone interested in more trips give Donn Bartlett a call.

YVAS HOLIDAY DESSERT SOCIAL AND PROGRAM



WHEN: MONDAY, DECEMBER 12, 6:00PM

WHERE: Mayflower Congregational Church, Rehberg Lane and Poly Drive, Billings, MT.

We invite you to our holiday 'social' and ask you to bring a festive dessert, enough to serve 6-8 people. Coffee and punch, plates, napkins and forks/spoons will be provided.

RESERVATIONS ARE REQUIRED: Please contact Sue Weinreis at 855-4181, or granpeak47@gmail.com

COST: \$5.00

HIGHLIGHT: The featured presentation will be by Bob Landis, a long-time friend and supporter of YVAS, and a nationally known Yellowstone National Park videographer. Come share an evening with this Emmy Award-winning wildlife cinematographer who has produced many films for programs such as National Geographic and Nature. His work has taken him to many parts of the world, but his home is Yellowstone National Park.

Foxes, coyote and even a grizzly soar through the air in slow motion in Bob Landis' summary of the best of 2016. Other creatures featured in slow motion: Bald Eagle catching trout, an Osprey builds his nest, Golden Eagles tangle at a carcass. The winner of best of the year award: a Golden Eagle that counts coup on a coyote in an attempt to steal the coyotes' food. The usual cast of characters join the slower folk: grizzly with cubs, elk fighting and a black wolf going nose to nose with a grizzly then being chased by coyotes. For the first time in 21 years Landis left Yellowstone to film in Denali where more grizzly footage was obtained plus shots of a Common Loon.



Bob Landis photo by Kevin Rhodes

Christmas Bird Count, Sunday, December 18, 2016

Again, this event is being coordinated by Jim Court. He is always looking for repeat CBC teams and any new volunteers. You can contact Jim at 406-259-5099 or custertours@gmail.com to set up your team and location.

The day begins with a no-host breakfast at Denny's Restaurant in downtown Billings at 7:00 AM. Here Jim organizes the teams and routes are solidified and the count begins. At dusk, meet at the Montana Audubon Center for pizza provided and BYOB/drinks. A summary of the days count will also occur.

If you already have your team and know your route contact Jim ahead of time therefore you wouldn't have to meet at Denny's to start your count.



YVAS CONSERVATION GRANT

Submitted by Nancy Wiggins

YVAS offers an annual Conservation Grant of up to \$1000, to fund a Montana educational institution, group, individual or individuals, engaged in some project which supports the YVAS mission "To promote enjoyment and protection of the natural environment through education, activism and conservation of bird habitat." Applications will be accepted year-round until February 1 of each year. The Grant Committee will review the grant applications and present the top candidates to the YVAS Board of Directors at the March meeting for voting and approval. Any applications received after February 1 will be eligible for the award pool the following year. For more information and to obtain an application form, visit YVAS website yvaudubon.org or contact Steve Regele 406-962-3115, or sregele@juno.com.

YVAS is in Need of a Data Base Administrator

Submitted by Deb Regele

The Data Base Administrator manages the YVAS Chapter membership data base. Some of the duties include adding/ updating new and renewing supporting YVAS Chapter members, their current addresses and expiration dates. The National Audubon membership list for the YVAS Chapter area is maintained by National Audubon. The Data Base Administrator supplies current mailing addresses to PostNet for the mailing of the Flyer (YVAS Newsletter). The Administrator also emails "MailChimp" notices to those members receiving the electronic (emailed) Flyer. Joel Bowers, the current YVAS Data Base Administrator, will train and be available to assist the new Administrator as needed. Familiarity with Excel spreadsheets or data base software is helpful but not required. Joel will train. This work can be performed by computer from virtually anywhere.

If you or anyone you know might be interested in volunteering a few hours every month, please contact any member of the YVAS Board of Directors for more information. Their contact information can be found in the Flyer or on the Website.

Submissions from Sue Weinreis, Osprey Nest Monitor postings from last summer.

Home Alone I arrived in my full mosquito armor and took a concealed position at approximated 5:26 pm to find the children ALONE in the nest, the biggest one in the "shade" position, mouth open. A family of 5 with 3 small children approached and the female (osprey) arrived loudly vocalizing. The two nestlings dove down into the nest (they are well-behaved). The family stopped and hesitated, reluctant to continue, probably because they saw me in my mosquito jacket, hooded, veiled, and lurking in the underbrush, wielding what could only be an uzi. I waved and beckoned and they screwed their courage to the sticking point and approached. I, of course, being the proud surrogate grandmother of twin osprey-lets, bored them with osprey facts and lore as the female circled us, loudly protesting. The male was perched serenely in his favorite tree. As I left, the female was back on the nest and I saw two little heads again. I have seen them up previously stretching wings, pooping, etc., but today it was just too hot to be flailing around in a small enclosed mite-ridden space. July 18, 2016

Empty Nest I arrived at 3:30 pm, in the heat of the day, to find the nest empty and no osprey to be seen. Smart birds! It was blistering hot! I wish I was hanging around the water fishing, too. Kind of lonesome. The first time EVER that I have been to this nest and not seen the male in His Spot. I walked down along the river and checked the trees on both sides, but no sign of the little family. Did I hear an osprey calling? Maybe not....I lingered for a while, listening to the cicadas. Then I walked over under the nest. The truck tracks were still there from the banding. Many sticks suitable for nest-building littered the ground under the platform. Feels like summer is over. Sigh. August 14, 2016

Photo at left of Sue, "The Lurker", taken by John Enwright, Sue's husband.



YVAS is delighted to welcome Barbara Garrett as our new Publicity Coordinator *Submitted by Dorothy Bartlett*

Barbara was born in northern Wisconsin and grew up surrounded by a rural life in an unplugged era. She graduated with a Bachelors and a Masters degree from Montana State University. She lived and worked in Montana for 25 years, then in New Mexico, only to return to her beloved Montana in 2016. She has worked as a public affairs specialist for WAPA (US Department of Energy-Western Area Power Administration) in Billings and NRCS (US Department of Agriculture-Natural Resources Conservation Service) in New Mexico. Barbara is also an American Impressionist artist with a focus on outdoor Montana and its wildlife. Barbara can be reached at 406-652-3180 and garrettimpressionart@gmail.com

Below is a piece recently released for publicity from Barbara Garrett, this provides a snapshot of the work she volunteers for YVAS as the Publicity Coordinator. This piece was in the Adult Alliance newsletter that goes out to 7000 seniors. Thanks for the great work, Barbara!

Birding Offers Seniors Great Winter Opportunities

Yellowstone Valley Audubon Society Contact:
Barbara Garrett – (406)652-3180

October 11, 2016

BILLINGS, MT - Snowy, blustery days are a good time to put another log on the fire and simmer a pot of Montana beef stew on the stove. But what about the great pristine days between storms when you are itching to get outside but wondering where to go and what to do.

The Yellowstone Valley Audubon Society (YVAS) has one answer. Birding. It is a wonderful activity achievable by seniors that offers many opportunities to get outdoors. And there is very little equipment required other than a bird book and field glasses.

YVAS offers birding support in several ways. First, they offer monthly programs September through May on the third Monday of the month at 7 p.m. at Mayflower Congregation Church after brief business meetings. These meetings and programs are open to the public and a good time to start learning about birding. Second, the YVAS website at www.yvaudubon.org/ has maps that show some local and regional Hotspots for Birding and list the birds that have been sighted at these sites. To further help those who are interested in becoming birders they have installed their first sign at one of these sites that acquaints visitors with what birds may be found there. This sign is at the Shiloh Conservation Area and notes some birds that can be found there include Black-capped Chickadee, House Finch, House Sparrow, and Killdeer. And YVAS anticipates posting more signs in the future. Third, one of the main focuses of YVAS are field trips, field trips, and more field trips. With warm weather, field trips are planned on a regular bases and again are open to the public.

Birding is an amazing way to enjoy nature and enhance one's life. And YVAS is always interested in helping the public to share in and learn more about this most interesting activity.

For further information contact Donn Bartlett, YVAS Field Trip Chairman at 406-252-0757 or Steve Regele, President, YVAS at 406-962-3115

"Lifer is a big word for us. It sits alongside words like rarity, extinction, even love. Seeing a lifer is a special moment, an accomplishment, the end of a particular journey and the beginning of the next, a pause in time to wonder and celebrate the diversity and fecundity of life. It is a profound moment, but fleeting."

From: **The Rarest Bird in the World, The Search for the Neshisar Nightjar** by Vernon R. L. Head

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 November and December 2016. 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 Data Base Administrator Joel M. Bowers at 406-534-3672 or membership.data@yvaudubon.org, with any questions.

NOVEMBER Renewals: Charles Carlson, Arleen Boyd, Craig Melder, Robert & Carolyn Jones, Robert Merchant, Bernard Quetchenbach, John Miller, Richard Moore, Charlotte Doney, James Hansen, Sue Weinreis, Arthur Lamey, Retha Merritt, Aiko Kawano, Gordon Cox, Dennis Holschbach, Carl & Virginia Kimmel, Lynn Larson, Susan Buerkle, Tricia Kenney, Mary Dvarishkis and Mary Frances Ruffatto.

DECEMBER Renewals: Barb Beck, Donna Bruce, Patricia Clayton, Marlene & Robert Cushing, Monty Gustafson, Ann Guthals, Dorcas Halverson, William Hand, Gloria Lake, John & Carol McNeal, Gail McGlothlin, Kristin Neva, Roger Otsot, Bobby Purcell, Michael Szczutkowski, Juliana Hicks Thigpen, Ruth Towe and Laura Voight.

November Meeting and Potluck Fund Raiser YOU ARE INVITED to a No-Host Potluck Dinner prior to the regular YVAS Chapter Meeting on November 21, 2016. Please bring a dish sufficient to feed 6-8 people. A call to Sue Weinreis (406-855-4181) to let her know what you are bringing is appreciated, but not required.

Donations of \$6.00 are appreciated to help defray the cost of the facility and AV equipment. The meal will begin promptly at 5:45 p.m. See you there!

Needed: Host/Coordinator for the Potlucks on April 18 and May 16.

Please contact Sue Weinreis at 406-855-4181 if you are willing to provide the main dish or if you are willing to assist another with the main dish. Your help is very much needed and appreciated!

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



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AUDUBON FLYER**

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Billings, MT 59103-1075

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Burrowing Owl, photo by Steve Linder from a trip to Costa Rica.

YVAS Bird of the Month

Red Kite (*Milvus milvus*)

Submitted by Peter Cummings



Length, 23-26 inches Wingspan 56-64 inches

Food: rodents, small birds & carrion. Habitat: Hilly areas with deciduous woodland mixed with open fields. In flight they are recognizable by their forked tail.

In the early 20th century, the Red Kite was virtually eradicated as a breeding bird in the UK, except for a small population in Central Wales. In the late 1980s, a re-introduction program by the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB) resulted in the release of young Kites in the Chilterns, where my sister lives in Princes Risborough, about 50 miles north of London.

The photo is of the Red Kite perched on a conifer was taken by Peter captured in his sister's neighbor's back garden.