



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 47, NUMBER 9

SEPTEMBER 2017

September 18, 6:30PM Chapter Meeting Program

Birds Being Dinosaurs and Dinosaurs Being "Bird Like"

The 2017 - 2018 Yellowstone Valley Audubon Society Chapter Meeting and Presentation season is commencing with a presentation on September 18 by world renowned paleontologist Dr. Jack Horner.

The evidence for birds being dinosaurs is overwhelming, and yet it is difficult for the general public to see the similarities. Dinosaurs are depicted wrongly as lizard-like creatures when in fact, they were probably much more "bird like."

Dr. Jack Horner: Dr. Horner is a world renowned paleontologist who was born and raised in Montana, educated at the University of Montana, and worked for 34 years at Montana State University as Curator and Regents Professor of Paleontology. He was also the technical advisor for all the Jurassic Park and Jurassic World movies. He is currently retired, and teaches a class on "creative thinking" at Chapman University in Southern California, and works with his educational company, Horner Science Group, based out of Seattle.

Dr. Horner's "bird dinosaurs" presentation will be free to YVAS members, there will be an admission fee for non-members. Non-members admission will be \$20 which will include a one year family membership to YVAS, and registered students will pay \$10 which will include a one year individual membership to YVAS. Membership applications can be found on the back of YVAS Flyers or on the YVAS website at yvaudubon.org under memberships. Memberships will also be available at the door but do come early!

Come enjoy this special presentation by Dr. Horner. Seating is limited. Doors open at 6:00 PM at the Mayflower Church, corner of Rehberg Lane and Poly Drive. The presentation will begin at 6:30 with questions, answers and discussion following the presentation.

Note: There will be no potluck dinner before the presentation.

Submitted by Steve Regele

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.

Friday, September 8, 4:00pm: Board of Directors Meeting

**Monday, September 18, 6:30pm (a special time to accommodate speaker):
Chapter Meeting**



THERE WILL NOT BE A POTLUCK DINNER PRIOR TO THE SEPTEMBER CHAPTER MEETING.

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/>

Highlights of the August 8 Board of Directors meeting

Treasurer's Report Goes Paperless. By keeping the Treasurer's report in electronic format, it will be easier to make corrections and to send out to Board members. A digital copy will be archived in the YVAS safe deposit box.

YVAS Policy & Procedures Manual Goes Paperless. Marco volunteered to update the YVAS Policies and Procedures Manual, before making it available on the YVAS website where all will have access to the most recent document.

Collaboration with Montana Audubon Center under consideration. Carolyn Sevier, Director of the Montana Audubon Center, visited the Board to propose opportunities for collaboration. MAC is working with Wild Birds Unlimited to develop a bird garden with feeding stations, native plants that will attract wild birds, and interpretive signage. MAC also presented a proposal to provide free or reduced MAC memberships to underprivileged children and families. The Board agreed to consider these proposals.

Board Meeting Date Changes. The Board of Directors will meet on the 2nd Friday of each month from 4-6 pm.

Who do you call when you find an INJURED bird?

Injured Birds: Details at yvaudubon.org (select the "Projects" tab and then "Injured Birds") or call MT Fish, Wildlife and Parks, (M-F) 406-247-2940.

Injured Raptors: Montana Raptor Conservation Center, Becky Kean, 406-585-1211.

Injured Waterfowl: WJH Bird Resources, Sheila McKay, 406-652-7175.

Twine Entangled Osprey in Nest: Dr. Marco Restani, 406-425-2608 or Deb Regele, 406-962-3115

Yellowstone Valley Audubon Society Officers:**AREA CODE 406**

President: Steve Regele, 962-3115, smregele@gmail.com

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

Secretary: Doreen Hartman, 697-0277, rdzlhman@bresnan.net

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

Board of Directors:

Donn Bartlett: 628-5058, donnbartlett@msn.com

Dorothy Bartlett, 628-5058, dpadanyi@live.com

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

Marco Restani: 425-2608, restani@stcloudstate.edu

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

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

Nancy Wiggins: 839-4461, nwiggins83@gmail.com

Montana's Congressional Delegation:

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

email Sen. Daines via his website: 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. Greg Gianforte:

email Rep. Gianforte via his website:

<https://gianforte.house.gov/contact/email>

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,
smregele@gmail.com

Data Base Administrator: Peter Cummins,
membership.data@yvaudubon.org

Facebook: Nancy Wiggins, 839-4461, nwiggins83@gmail.com

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

Field Trip Chair: Donn Bartlett, 628-5058, donnbartlett@msn.com

Hospitality: Audrey Jurovich, 656-2748

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

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

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

Program Committee: Steve Regele, 962-3115, smregele@gmail.com

Nancy Wiggins, 839-4461, 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 Friday of each month at 4:00pm. 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 5, Shorebirds, Hawks, & Prairie Birds*Submitted by Pam Pipal*

Fourteen birders headed to Broadview, MT, for the first trip after the summer hiatus. Along the way we stopped at three ponds to the right of MT Highway 3. The first two had 13 and 8 species, respectively (+ 4 species un-ID'd). The most productive pond was at mile marker 27. There we observed 17 species (+ 1 un-ID'd), including 12 Burrowing Owls in the prairie dog colony to the right of the pond. At Broadview Pond we hit a bonanza of 44 species (+ 3 un-ID'd), including, drum-roll please, a Great Egret, and 11 American White Pelicans! Two other treasured species included 1 Virginia Rail and 3 Soras. Unbelievably, several Eared Grebes were still nesting on little sodden mounds of vegetation, although 1 Grebe was spotted with a hatchling on its back.

From birders that went beyond Broadview Pond, Brian Henderson adds, 'Just west of Broadview we saw a Bald Eagle nest, 3 Northern Harriers, a female Lazuli, a Yellow Warbler, a couple of Bullock's Orioles, and some sparrows: Clay-colored, Vesper, and Lark Sparrow. Later added a Merlin, a Prairie Falcon, a few Red-tailed Hawks, and a family of Swainson's Hawks. Ended up with more than 80 species. Thank you Mike Weber for leading this trip, and thanks to Brian Henderson for recording species and species numbers on eBird!



Photos: Left, George and Bernie Mowat scoping Broadview Pond by Dorothy Bartlett; at right, Sophie Baretta (Will Crain's granddaughter) having lunch with a perfect mentor, Helen Carlson Cummins by Will Crain.

Saturday, August 12, Bridger Creek Road*Submitted by Dorothy Bartlett*

Six cars and 14 birders met at IchKaPee campground in Columbus to embark on an outing led by Ruth Vanderhorst and Stan Heath. We were headed to an area most of us had not birded before outside of Reed Point, on Bridger Creek Road, which Stan had scouted a week or so before with some pretty interesting results.

Before we started the drive, safety on birding outings was reviewed. Everyone is encouraged to look at the revised guidelines at www.yvaudubon.org and in the September Flyer.

We started out by seeing lots and lots of Cedar Waxwings. They are such beautiful, classy, even regal looking birds. The morning lighting was perfect for the great views we had of them.

Identifying birds gets more complicated this time of year with all the immature birds around, but fortunately we had some expert birders with us who seem to have no trouble with this. We were so lucky to see Red-headed Woodpeckers, adult and immature, so they must be nesting in that area. They seem to be moving in an easterly direction. We were also treated to Lewis's Woodpeckers, again adults and immatures. This had been a good year for viewing them, as well.

We saw a Gray Catbird, American Kestrels, Lazuli Buntings, Tree Swallows and Violet-green Swallows as well as many others.

It was a terrific day. Thank you so much Stan and Ruth.

August 18-20, Bowdoin NWR Field Trip*Submitted by Ruth Vanderhorst*

Six intrepid birders set off on the 3 day extravaganza which included stops at James Kipp State Park for a nice selection of birds and lunch, then on to Malta and Bowdoin National Wildlife Refuge for a stop at headquarters and the first look at the lake and then off to Nelson Reservoir where we saw loads of shorebirds, a few loons and a good look at the very dry country. The leadership of Brian Henderson gave us all those shorebirds. Most of the raptors can be credited to Marco Restani. We made a quick survey around the reservoir and then it was time to get the dust off before dining. The evening saw us all out in front of our rooms at the Maltana watching the Nighthawks, Chimney Swifts and Turkey Vultures. Saturday morning before departing a couple of Blue Jays called before we drove to Bowdoin. Around the reservoir from the right seemed to enable sightings not often made. A Great-horned Owl was one of the early finds. Sunday morning we were off to Zortman and Camp Creek Campground which provided a bonanza of warblers and other song birds, more than we have seen on recent trips. It was so good to see Orange-crowned Warbler and Wilson's Warblers for a change. Birds seem to taper off about 10:00 o'clock so we headed out, stopping at the old Zortman Cemetery on the way. No birds greeted us there so we made a return visit to James Kipp for lunch. All told, we identified 126 species on this trip. It was a small but very congenial group. Thanks to all. We enjoyed the trip a great deal. Let's do it again!



*Photos by Dorothy Bartlett during the weekend trip to Bowdoin NWR, at left: **Caspian Terns**; at right, Brian Henderson with Ruth Vanderhorst trying to see where Brian should place the scope to see inside that Bluebird box, is our best guess?*

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 628-5058, donnbartlett@msn.com

Sept 6	Wed	Fall migrants.	Meet at Riverfront Park, S. Billings Blvd. 1 st parking area on the right. 5:00 pm. Mike Weber, leader.
Sept 16	Sat	Pryor Mountains: CANCELLED	CANCELLED, in honor of Billie Hicks Memorial.
Sept 24 or 30	TBD	Hawk Watch	
Nov 4	Sat	Yellowtail Dam After-bay. 8:00 am to 6:00 pm.	Sack lunch. Brian Henderson, leader.



Montana Audubon Center Annual Fundraiser is planned Sept. 23, 2017.
“*Evening Under the Big Sky*” is a Dinner Reception by Commons 1882 with a No-Host Bar and Live Music starts at 5:30pm at the MAC, 7026 S. Billings Boulevard.
REGISTER ONLINE: www.mtaudubon.org/center
Single Tickets: \$75/Table of 8: \$550.



Tips and Responsibilities for Birding with a YVAS Group

- * DO be on time for the trip or even early.
 - * DO let the leader know if there is a particular bird you would like to see.
 - * DO feel free to ask questions about birds and the trip.
 - * DO be safe.
 - Stay out of the way of motorized traffic and remind others to do the same.
 - If you are driving, do not stop in traffic lane (paved, gravel or dirt roads).
 - Park on the shoulder of the road or off the roadway.
 - Be aware of snakes, bees, and other critters as well the birds!
 - DO be careful and considerate of the animals and of other motorized and pedestrian traffic.
 - The birding group will travel as a caravan. Carpooling is good for gas conservation and is desirable for other reasons as well.
 - Keep speed reasonable to the normal traffic flow on a given road, and maintain a safe distance between each car in the caravan.
 - The leader will announce scheduled stops. If a car decides to make an unscheduled stop, other cars are encouraged to keep driving to the next scheduled stop. The car that made the unscheduled stop is asked to get as far off the road as possible. The group that is on the scheduled route does not have an obligation or responsibility for the vehicle that stopped. We want to keep each other safe but want to avoid putting others at risk based on the decision of one driver.
 - If the number of vehicles requires it, the caravan group may be split into sub groups for safety and to improve opportunities for bird viewing by trip members.
 - At a minimum the trip leader and a car bringing up the rear will have radios. If a caravan member needs to or wants to pull out of the caravan please notify one of these drivers for safety and other considerations. This radio arrangement will hold for all caravan groups and subgroups.
- REMEMBER: SAFETY FIRST THEN BIRDING FUN**
- * DO stay with the leader even if the group is standing still. This is particularly true when the group is looking for a specific bird.
 - * DO be quiet when appropriate but speak up if you are unable to locate the bird the group is looking at.
 - * DO wear quiet clothing in quiet colors.
 - * DO be prepared for less than adequate bathroom facilities. This may mean long periods between bathrooms or outhouses or even nooks in the great outdoors. If this is a concern, please feel free to ask about the availability of facilities.
 - * DO leave your pets at home.
 - * DO carpool when you are able and share gas costs with the other passengers in your vehicle.
 - * DO turn off your cell phone while in the field birding with the group.
 - * DO be considerate of others when identifying bird calls with an electronic device.
 - * DO understand that you are responsible and liable for your own actions and decisions.

Remembering Billie Hicks

Billie Hicks played an important role shaping YVAS into the organization it is today. In 1970, she served five terms as president of the Billings Audubon Society which later changed its name to Yellowstone Valley Audubon Society. She published the organization's first newsletter, *The Bulletin*, in 1970.

In the 1970's, Billie was one of several activists on behalf of YVAS to help preserve Two Moon Park as a public natural area. At that time, there was private interest and pressure to develop the land for commercial use.

Billie's knowledge and bird identification skills were excellent. She led countless bird trips, both planned and unplanned, eager to help new birders locate and identify bird species. Her enthusiasm was contagious.

Billie continued to be very active on the YVAS Board of Directors and as a Chapter member for decades. She dedicated many hours over the years to tallying numbers of species for the National Audubon Society's Christmas Bird Count. She spent countless hours working on YVAS fundraisers that supported numerous conservation and education efforts.

From some that knew her:

Ruth Vanderhorst: "She was one of what I think as lionesses of YVAS. She influenced many of us with her birding knowledge, skill and willingness to serve in many, many ways. Tireless, good worker, excellent at teaching bird identification by pointing out field marks, eager to go out with new and not so new birders, CBC, fundraising, tigress of YVAS with Bebe (Fitzgerald) and Helen (Carlson Cummins)."

Bernie Mowat: "I remember Billie as a very nice lady who loved to bird and was a very good birder. We stopped at her home near Fort Rockvale and birded there on our YVAS Field trips. She led us on back roads and then around Bridger, too. She helped us find a Virginia Rail on the road between Laurel and Park City. We would knock two rocks together and they would often reply and even come out of the reeds!"

Pam Pipal: "I'm still carrying around a little slip of paper she gave me on my first Chapter meeting in January 2013, with her name and phone number. She invited me to call and come to her place to see birds."

Jeannette D: "She was a great lady."

Deb Regele: "Billie lived behind me, across Rock Creek and downstream a couple of miles. We would compare notes on bird species, arrival dates, and nesting birds. We both had Sandhill Cranes near our homes but they actually nested closer to Billie's. She had great fun in telling me about her walk one day when she accidentally came upon their nest that had a nestling. I remember laughing when she described the offensive-defensive style of the parent and her very fast retreat."

Helen Carlson Cummins: "I first met Billie in the early seventies, when she was President of the YVAS, and I was living in Bozeman at the time. She was a tough act to follow in this role. Billie, Bebe Fitzgerald and I, along with other members of Gordon Weber's harem went on many enjoyable birding trips, Billie always did the driving, she was the best driver, and a wonderful person to be with. We covered a lot of ground both in and out of Montana and saw plenty of birds, it certainly added to my Life List. I have many wonderful memories of the times we were together and of the tremendous fun we had. I will treasure them. It was an honor to know her." - From the August 2017 Flyer article by Helen Carlson Cummins.

The Memorial Service for Billie is scheduled for Saturday, September 16, at 9 AM at the Montana Audubon Center.

Submitted by Deb Regele



Not sure how many of you have similar experiences to this scene playing out at left, but Deb Regele submitted this photograph she captured on her trail cam the night of July 29 this summer. The raccoon is enjoying an evening cocktail of hummingbird nectar she has out for much smaller visitors.

Very interesting. She now knows why the feeder is empty having thought all the while she had flocks of hummers while she wasn't looking!

Thanks, Deb for humoring us! *Submitted by Deb Regele, edits Trenay Hart*

Here at YVAS we have many discoveries during our birding outings. Nest monitor, Board member and aspiring photographer, Dorothy Bartlett took this shot on an excursion to see what her Osprey were up to this breeding season.

"Can you identify the fledglings in this Osprey nest in Columbus, across from the cemetery?"

"Whoa, who dat fledgling?"

These were captions that came to mind when Dorothy discovered GRASS was growing in the nest she monitors.

Maybe with help from Steve Regele (grass expert, NOT a weed expert) we will know what was growing in the nest. Definitely NOT Osprey! *Submitted by Dorothy, edits by Trenay Hart*



RENEWALS/ANNOUNCEMENTS

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 the Data Base Administrator: Peter Cummins at membership.data@yvaudubon.org with any questions.

SEPTEMBER Renewals: Gwen Emmerson, Vern & Sharon Martinz, Velma Pederson, Ann V. Shesne, David & Ruth Torrence.



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

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

**Non-Profit Organization
PRST STD
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
BILLINGS, MT
PERMIT NO. 27**



Flushed, a beautiful pastel inspired by the Exxon Ponds field trip earlier this year *by member/artist Barbara Garrett.*

YVAS Bird of the Month Great Egret



During the field trip to Broadview Ponds on August 5 Dorothy Bartlett captured this photograph of a Great Egret near some Canada Geese. The Great Egret is found in wetlands in our area during the spring and fall migration. This year a lucky few caught this elegant bird passing through on its' way back to wintering grounds in Mexico, West Indies, Central and South America.

Known to most birders as pivotal to conservation movements as they were hunted nearly to extinction for their plumes in the late nineteenth century and some of the first laws to protect birds were sparked. More svelte than a Great Blue Heron, these are still large birds with impressive wingspans. Classically hunting heron fashion, immobile or wading to capture fish with a deadly jab of their yellow bill.

Submitted by Trenay Hart and adapted from All About Birds