



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.

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NOV/DEC 2017

November 20, 2017 Chapter Meeting 7PM

Wind and Wildlife: Gauging Impacts of a NorthWestern Energy Wind Farm to Birds and Bats



Although wind energy developments help reduce carbon emissions, they are not entirely environmentally neutral. Bird and bat fatalities from collisions with wind turbines have been documented at all wind farms across the country. To mitigate these conflicts, wind farms should be sited wisely through research and on-the-ground surveys before construction. The US Fish and Wildlife Service also recommends that post-construction monitoring be conducted to assess impacts to birds and bats once the wind farm is operational. In 2015, NorthWestern Energy contracted Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks to plan and implement the post-construction monitoring at the Spion Kop Wind Farm located east of Great Falls. Monitoring began in May 2016, which included searching areas below wind turbines for bird and bat fatalities, assessing raptor use through surveys and nest monitoring, and recording bat activity with acoustic detectors. At the conclusion of the first year of monitoring, we found impacts to birds to be low relative to other wind farms in the west, and below thresholds established in Spion Kop's Bird and Bat Conservation Strategy. However, the observed bat fatality rate met the threshold established in the Conservation Strategy, so an additional year of monitoring was agreed upon. Kim Linnell, Conservation Technician with Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks, leads the Spion Kop Wind Farm monitoring project. Her presentation will review wind energy in Montana, FWP's collaboration with NorthWestern Energy, the components of post-construction monitoring, current status of the project, and future work.

Photo: submitted by Kim Linnell, her with bat at the Spion Kop Wind Farm.

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, November 10 and December 8, 4:00pm: Board of Directors Meeting

Monday, November 20 and December 18, 7:00pm: Chapter Meeting



We will hold a YVAS fundraiser dinner at 5:30, before the Chapter meeting. Dinner donation: \$6. Ruth Vanderhorst has generously volunteered to coordinate. Please contact before Friday, Nov. 17 to make reservations and your dish contribution. *There is NO potluck prior to the December meeting.*

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☞ We're on the web! yvaudubon.org

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

Highlights of the October 13, 2017, Board of Directors Meeting

The YVAS Annual Report for July 1, 2016, to June 30, 2017, will be published in the November Flyer. Copies will also be available at the November 20, 2017, meeting.

The YVAS membership money received at the Jack Horner Program will remain in the Operating Fund, same as is all membership money that is received throughout the year.

Steve R will confirm with Bob Landis the date and time for the December 18 presentation. The Board agreed to use the program as a membership drive similar to the Jack Horner Program in September. The Board decided to not have food at the December event this year.

Steve McConnell with the City of Billings confirmed that the MOU with the City of Billings has been signed regarding the maintenance and management of Bluebird houses at Phipps Park.

The Christmas Bird Count Instruction sheet included in the individual route Instructional Packets has been updated.

Board Members were reminded to be on the lookout for a publicity coordinator to replace outgoing Barbara Garrett.

Remote access for Board Meetings was discussed but more information is needed and is being put together.

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, September 30 Hawk Watch Red Lodge Area*Submitted by Carolyn Jones*

Our group of 10 birders set out Saturday morning, September 30, to see what was headed south. We traveled the Meteteetsee trail from both ends and met at the high point of the trail. Camp chairs set up, we proceeded to watch the skies. The first bird was a good one, Broad-winged Hawk. With partly cloudy skies and no wind, the watching was not very fruitful until we got some breeze. Then came a Red-tailed Hawk, Coopers hawk, American Kestrel, and two Sharp-shinned Hawks. We had a wonderful show over head of a Coopers and a Sharp-shinned circling each other and occasionally making contact, for what reason, who knows. Stan Heath pointed out the difference between the two, which was fairly easy to see from our vantage point. The Sharp-shinned's head was barely visible between the wings, which curve a little toward the head and the tail end is strait. The Cooper's head projects beyond the straight wings and the tail end is slightly rounded. These differences are subtle, so identification is still not easy!

The count for the day was: 1 Broad-winged Hawk, 2 Red-tailed Hawks, 2 Golden Eagles, 1 American Kestrel, 1 Northern Harrier, and the hawk of the day: Sharp-shinned Hawk totaling 9 birds.

I took a walk about and saw a Sharp-shinned Hawk hunting. The hawk made two passes at a Clark's Nutcracker with no success, after which all the Nutcrackers in the area disappeared. Then a Stellar's Jay appeared and the hawk also made two passes at it. After the second pass, I didn't hear either bird calling anymore and I heard a brief flutter of wings in the undergrowth. Since I didn't want to scare the hawk from its possible meal, it will remain a mystery if it actually killed the jay or not.

By about 2 PM activity had slowed and we decided it was time to leave.

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

Nov 4	Sat	Yellowtail Dam After-bay. 8:00 am to 6:00 pm.	Sack lunch. Brian Henderson, leader.
Dec 16	Sat	Annual Christmas Bird Count	Jim Court, leader. custertours@gmail.com 259-5099
Jan 1	Fri	New Year's Day Field Trip to Yellowtail Dam After-bay 8:00 am to 6:00 pm	Sack lunch. Brian Henderson, leader.
Jan 13	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.



UPCOMING EVENTS

Annual **Christmas Bird Count** date has been decided: Saturday, DECEMBER 16. Contact Jim Court for details and routes. Again, this year there will be a count of species at the completion of the day at the Montana Audubon Center. custertours@gmail.com 259-5099 or 860-0504

Upcoming Events at Montana Audubon Center

What: Break Camps

MAC Break Camps are built on the same structure as their summer camps: plenty of adventure and exploration in a safe, fun, outdoor environment. All camps are held on-site at MAC and adjacent public lands and trails. Programming is diverse and educationally relevant. Back-to-back camps are designed for students K-6 to attend any one of or all camps in a series.

Cost: \$60/camper/day, \$54 for members, Scholarships available up to 90% of cost.



*Highlights of 2017***Monday, December 18 at 7:00 PM****Mayflower Congregational Church**

Come enjoy this special presentation by Bob Landis, a long-time friend and supporter of YVAS. Bob, a nationally known Yellowstone National Park videographer, will be the speaker at the YVAS December Chapter Meeting.

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.

Bob Landis' program, "*Highlights of 2017*", will be free to YVAS members. The admission fee for non-members is \$20 and includes a one-year family membership to YVAS. Registered students will pay \$10 that includes a one-year individual membership to YVAS. Membership applications will be available at the door. To join or renew ahead of time, YVAS membership applications can be found at the back of this Flyer or on our website at www.yvaudubon.org under the Memberships tab.

Seating is limited. Doors open at 6:30 PM. The presentation will begin at 7:00 PM with questions, answers and discussion following the presentation.

NOTE: This year there will not be a potluck dinner or dessert social before the presentation. *Submitted by Deb Regele, with photo of bison and geese in YNP. Photo of Bob Landis courtesy of Brett French at the Billings Gazette.*

CONSERVATION NEWS**Osprey Platform**

It was another busy summer for most of the 42 Osprey Nest Monitors. For some, however, it was a shorter session than usual mostly due to geese that took over an occasional Osprey nesting site or failure of an occupied nest. This year there were 118 Osprey nesting sites being monitored along the Yellowstone, Stillwater and Big Horn Rivers. Of these, 66 nests were occupied by a pair of Ospreys, 48 nests fledged 115 young and 77 nestlings were banded.

For those that were able to attend, the monitors wrapped up the summer with the annual Osprey Picnic of burgers and brats.

Submitted by Deb Regele

Little Help!

The Board of Directors is looking for a volunteer to advertise Yellowstone Valley Audubon Society monthly and special events. This would take a couple hours each month and would include distributing YVAS announcements to local media outlets. If you are interested in doing this please contact Steve Regele at 406-962-3115 or at smregele@gmail.com

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 December and November. 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.



NOVEMBER and DECEMBER Renewals: (November) Arleen Boyd, Jean Carlson, Gordon Cox, Catharine M. Glennon, Robert & Carolyn Jones, Patricia L Kenney, Carl & Virginia Kimmel, Retha Merritt, Susan Weinreis, Johnna Lee L. Williams. (December) Patricia Clayton, Marlene & Robert Cushing, Cecil E. Gubser, David & Sandy Kennedy, Gail McGlothlin, Joan McKeown, John & Carol McNeal, Kristin Neva, Larry C. Newell, Susan Newell & Dick Walton, Roger Otstot, Bobby Purcell, Hoyle & Jo Anne Setzer, James Snyder, Jack & Carol Sterling, Michael Szczutkowski.

**Yellowstone Valley Audubon Society
Annual Report of YVAS Funds
July 1, 2016 - June 30, 2017**

	Operating Fund	Aud. Adv. Fund	Osprey Fund	Yellowstn River Fund	Gen. Proj. Fund*	Endow. Fund	BCF Endow. Fund 1/
Balance on 7-1-16	18,195	2,000	6,545	1,744	10,610	0	42,895
Revenue	6,632	120	1,620	0	4,514	3,217	13,291
Expenses	(4,268)	(332)	(1,054)	0	(2,779)	(3,125)	7,110
Balance on 6-30-17	20,559	1,788	7,111	1,744	12,345	92	63,296

TOTAL OF ALL YVAS FUNDS: \$ 106,935.00

***General Projects Fund includes:**

OSPREY PROJECTS

Osprey Rescue Fund \$ 2,497.30

CONSERVATION PROJECTS

Conservation Grant 345.00

Unspecified Conservation Projects 282.00

Clark's Fork WMA 295.07

SPECIAL PROGRAMS

Holiday Fundraiser/Other 1,461.33

EDUCATION

Rose Sylling Trust 3,954.18

Birdathon 2016 - for Dover Park sig 1,690.00

Birdathon 2017 - for Dover Park sig 1,085.07

M and K Fried Community Education 500.00

Chapter Dinner 1-16-17 164.00

Nocturnal Bird Call Recording Proje 71.54

TOTAL \$ 12,345.49

1/ Revenue represents deposits made by YVAS to the Fund and Expenses represent net increases/decreases to the Fund.

**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
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PAID
BILLINGS, MT
PERMIT NO. 27**



European Jay, photo by Peter Cummins. He was home in England a few weeks ago and captured this photo to share with YVAS members.

YEAR END DONATIONS

We depend on the generosity of our members to keep our totally volunteer organization functioning. There is a list of Board Members and Committee Chairs on the inside cover of our Flyer, any of whom are happy to talk to you about some of the projects we are involved with. Two examples are the Night Migration Recording project and YVAS Signage in area parks.

Please consider donating to YVAS. Send a donation to YVAS before December 31st and take advantage of our not for profit status for tax purposes. On www.yvaudubon.org, go to the "Membership Tab", then to "Support Us" to use PayPal for your donation. Or you can mail a check to PO Box 1075, Billings, Mt., 59103-1075. If you like, you can specify which project you would like to support.

The YVAS Endowment Fund is invested so that interest from the Fund allows perpetuation of YVAS as an organization. Talk to your accountant about the benefits of donating to the YVAS Endowment Fund, managed by the Billings Community Foundation, which allows Montana donors to take advantage of the Montana Endowment Tax Credit. This credit offers Montana taxpayers a dollar-for-dollar reduction in taxes owed in the year the gift was given. You can also contact board member Steve Linder (becon1@bresnan.net or 380-0073) or Donn Bartlett (donnbartlett@msn.com or 628-5058) for more information.

Your generous donation will go directly toward supporting the YVAS mission today and into the future:

"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"