

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.

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YVAS Board of Directors Highlights- August 10, 2020

► The Board met in Veteran's Park so that we could easily maintain physical distancing. It was a beautiful afternoon and we enjoyed the change of venue...for now.

► With no YVAS chapter meeting in April or May, we find ourselves beginning a new fiscal year without electing officers! Until we meet again to have an election, Sue Weinreis will fulfill the duties of secretary. Former Secretary Doreen Hartman will remain on the Board.

► Steve Mc. reported that there will be a small Arbor Day celebration on September 24 at Centennial Park on 32nd and St. John's. About 30 trees will be planted and there will be a short ceremony. No educational activities for students are planned.

► President Steve R. reported that no bird trips are scheduled at this time, but if you are going birding and would like company, call Donn Bartlett. He will notify others via the hotline.

Submitted by Sue Weinreis

Our monthly Programs and routinely scheduled birding trips have had to be cancelled "until further notice" due to Covid-19 certainty's and uncertainties. Other YVAS activities and projects have been adversely affected too. YVAS is respecting science, good sense, and the well-being and needs of fellow citizens by adhering to best-Covid-management practices.

[The YVAS September meeting of the Board of Directors will be held at Rose Park from 4 PM to 6 PM.](#)

Rose Park is situated northwest of the corner of 21st St W and Avenue B. The meeting will be held in the tree area north of the Pool. Parking is usually available along 21st St W. Those attending are asked to bring their own chair and of course a face covering.

News about YVAS projects, accomplishments and activities as well as YVAS Mission related news will be kept up to date via Facebook facebook.com/yvaudubon/, the YVAS web site yvaudubon.org/ and the monthly Flyer newsletters. If you have specific questions or would like further information please contact a Board Member through the information available at those sources.

We of the YVAS Board hope you all strive to stay healthy, are healthy, and find new and old (but safe) ways to enjoy the countless good things 'out there'.

Submitted by Steve Regele

The 500th Osprey nestling banded at Livingston, June 2020



The year of COVID presented challenges to the YVAS Osprey Nest Monitoring Project, most of which were overcome. Once again, 40 highly motivated volunteers monitored over 100 nests along an impressive stretch of the Yellowstone River from Gardiner to Miles City. Although in-class orientations scheduled for April had to be cancelled, the rest of the season's efforts paid off. In fact, the project achieved a major milestone by banding its 500th nestling. Banding continues to yield valuable information on short and long-range movements, survival, and lifetime reproductive success. Congratulations to all for another successful season and thanks for the support provided by Beartooth Electric Cooperative, Montana-Dakota Utilities, NorthWestern Energy, Park Electric Cooperative, Yellowstone Valley Electric Cooperative, and Yellowstone Valley Tree Surgeons. *Submitted by Marco Restani*

FIELD TRIPS

Due to Covid-19, YVAS has decided to SUSPEND all birding trips until further notice. We do, however urge everyone to bird on their own or with others while adhering to the pandemic requirements. If you have any questions or comments, please let me know. Here's to good birding and good weather!

Donn Bartlett
406.812.1008



WE ARE ON THE WEB YVAUDUBON.ORG

Have you visited the YVAS Facebook Page?
What are you waiting for?

facebook.com/yvaudubon



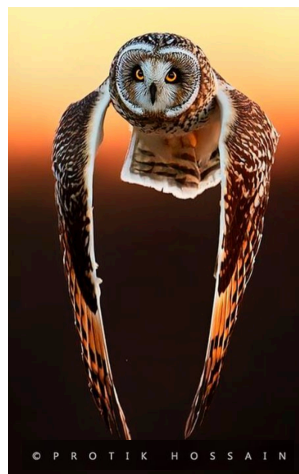
Montana Raptor Conservation Center

August 22 at 4:58 PM · 🌐

This Burrowing owl traveled over 400 miles today from Fort Peck to Bozeman. Thanks to caring individuals and extremely generous transport volunteers we are able... [See More](#)

Check this out: Owl Research Institute (ORI)

OWLS! 🦉 Owl Research, Education & Conservation since 1988. Field station & home base - Charlo, Montana. Species projects in Montana and Alaska. www.owlresearchinstitute.org



owlresearchinstitute We have talked about the clap of the Short-eared Owl before, and it is an incredible thing to experience. But this shot of it in action is just 🦉!

During mating season, the male Short-eared Owl will perform a courtship routine that includes a song and a flight display where the male will ascend into the sky and then stoop, usually clapping it's wings under the body 5-10 times. The female is usually perched below also giving call.

Read more: www.owlresearchinstitute.org



Online Raptor Identification Workshops!

Brought to you by Montana Audubon and Flathead Audubon Society: September 15th – September 17th 10 am and 4 pm each day.

There is no question that learning how to identify raptors takes time. That is why we are celebrating raptor week with Flathead Audubon Society by providing a three-part raptor identification series, which will support raptor migration research and help you develop your raptor identification skills. The identification classes will be held online, so you can join us from anywhere, no matter where you live.

Led by Montana Audubon's Director of Policy & Science, Amy Seaman, classes will cover Buteos on day one, Accipiter's and Allies on day two, and Eagles and Vultures on day three, and will be jam packed with both introductory and advanced tactics used to identify Montana's migratory raptors.

Registration fees: \$10 for one class or \$25 for all three!
Registration will open on August 25th at MontanaAudubon.org.

Email Amy Seaman at aseaman@mtaudubon.org.

Victory! Federal Judge Overturns Bird-Killing Policy From National Audubon Society

Great news for birds! In 2018, Audubon, several other conservation groups, and eight states filed lawsuits challenging the U.S. Department of the Interior's elimination of longstanding bird protections under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA). Yesterday, a federal court threw out the administration's rollback of the MBTA, ruling the policy is contrary to the foundational 100-year-old bird protection law.

In 2017, the Department of the Interior overturned decades of bipartisan precedent to say that the MBTA's protections apply only to activities that purposefully kill birds. The court ruled yesterday that this interpretation was "contrary to the plain meaning of the MBTA." For context, if the administration's legal opinion had been in place in 2010, BP would have faced no consequences under the MBTA for the more than one million birds killed in the Deepwater Horizon oil spill. Read more at: <https://www.audubon.org/news/victory-federal-judge-rules-administrations-bird-killing-policy-illegal>

George Bird Grinnell Biography **Review by Jerry Dalton**

GRINNELL: AMERICA'S ENVIRONMENTAL PIONEER AND HIS RESTLESS DRIVE TO SAVE THE WEST. John Taliaferro, author. 2019. Text is 519 pages. \$35. Billings Public Library call # Biography Grinnell. George Bird Grinnell, 1849-1938.

Both the late Jim Phelps and Steve Regele, YVAS members, share qualities with George Bird Grinnell. They have always seemed to be gathering information about national and local conservation issues, talking to influential people, and advocating for policy to reduce current detrimental impacts and improve the future for wild animals, their habitat, and humans that appreciate nature.

Grinnell was an Easterner, born and resided in New York City his whole life. At age eight he was first able to roam freely in woods and meadows when his family moved to Audubon Park, John James Audubon's estate, near what would become Central Park. Mrs. Audubon, as a widow, was one of Grinnell's teachers. The Grinnell family business was trading in dry goods, profitable during the Civil War, and later in finance and securities. Grinnell barely graduated from Yale, but Yale connections throughout his life with men of means and influence, furthered his causes.

The author, John Taliaferro, pointed out how the actual values of turn of the century society fell short of claimed values. In 1876, Grinnell became the natural history editor of *Forest and Stream*, a weekly sportsman's journal. The hunting and fishing journal preached fair chase, and advocated for establishing seasons and limits. What it didn't say was that all predators were routinely killed, and the wealth of Grinnell's orbit were very ambitious trophy hunters.

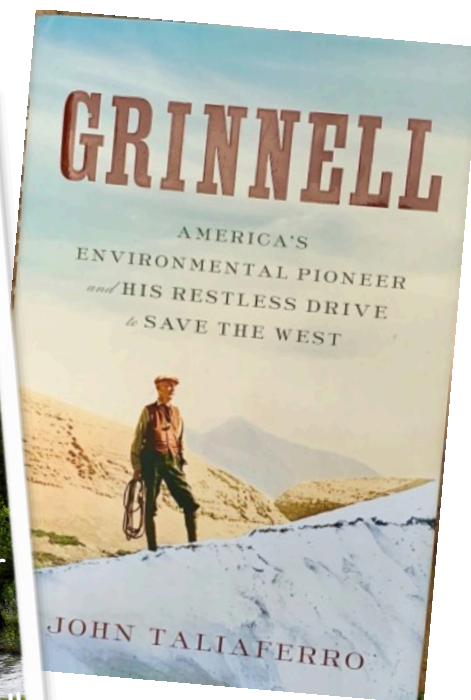
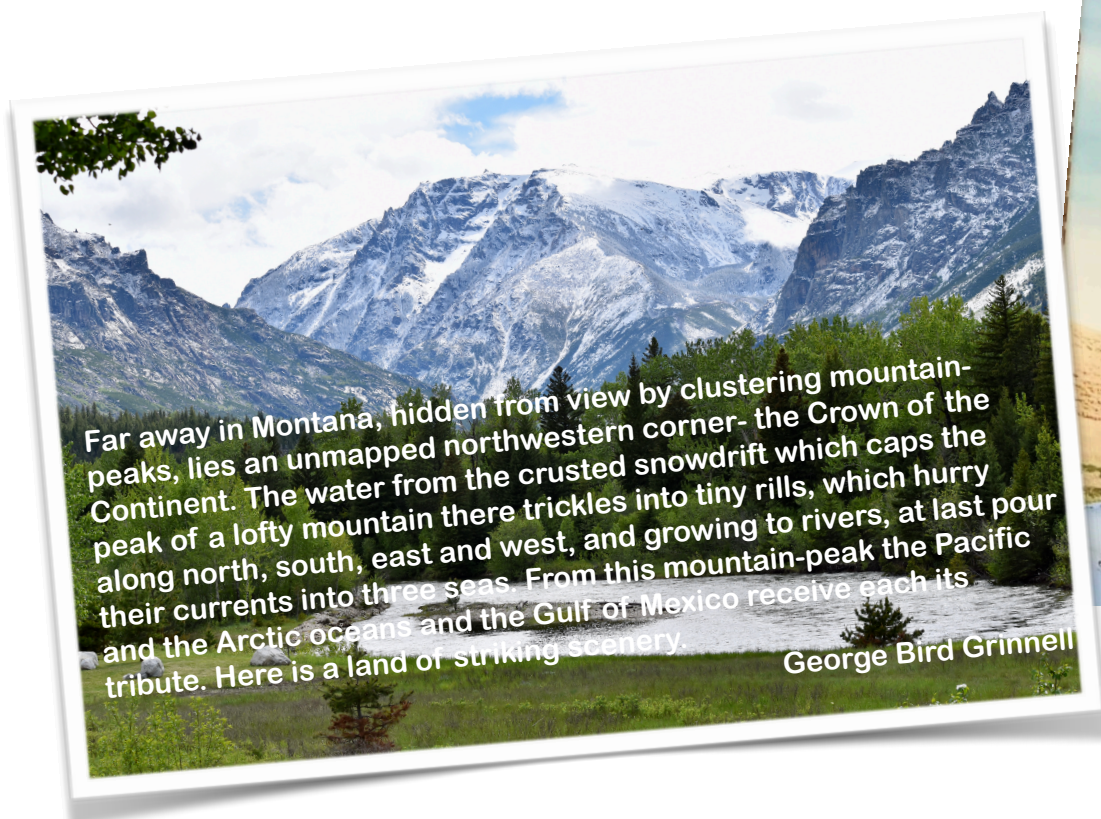
In early 1886, Grinnell launched the Audubon Society with an article in *Forest and Stream*. Mail in a signed pledge to follow three rules: end the killing of any bird not used for food, end the destruction of nests and eggs of all wild birds, and bring to an end "the wearing of feathers for ornaments or trimming for dress." Ostrich feathers were exempt. In return, a member received a certificate bearing a portrait of John J. Audubon. Children were welcomed; membership was free.

By December 1886, neatly 20,000 people had taken the Audubon pledge and formed more than 300 local chapters. In January 1887, Grinnell and his *Forest and Stream* partner started Audubon magazine. The price was six cents a copy. By January 1889 with 50,000 members, Grinnell was overwhelmed and Audubon Magazine ceased publication. *Forest and Stream* losses were mounting. Issuing all those certificates of membership and publishing Audubon Magazine almost for free was too much. Later, in 1896, two wealthy Boston women formed Massachusetts Audubon Society. Other states followed. In 1905, the national Association of Audubon Societies was formed, and that became the National Audubon Society.

In 1888, Theodore Roosevelt gathered a handful of well to do "gentlemen" hunters including Grinnell to form the Boone and Crocket Club, limiting core members to no more than one hundred men of high social standing, of intelligence and education, who wished for abundant large game, into perpetuity, for hunting by fair chase, moderating their "natural impulse" toward wanton slaughter. High minded sportsmen saw themselves as better hunters than the common man, not slaughterers.

Grinnell advocated protecting Yellowstone NP from poachers, from private commercialization like hotels and hamburger stands, from timbering, and from extending the railroad from Gardner to Cooke City for mining. He made nearly annual summer trips by railroad out West to his ranch in Wyoming, Yellowstone NP, and especially the future Glacier NP, to explore, and for hunting. During these trips he visited Blackfeet and Cheyenne tribes, gathering stories and ethnographic observations. He advocated for honoring treaty rights, but he was also all in for purchasing Blackfeet land to fill out the eastern edge of Glacier NP.

There is much more detail of the people and issues of the history of American conservation in this biography. It reads like a story that pulls you back to learn more. Give it a try at your Billings Public Library.



Bear Canyon Trail and Weed Work 2020

Five YVAS members and friends spent the day of August 5, 2020 clearing some of the trail in lower Bear Canyon and clipping noxious weed seed heads. The non-motorized trail is about a mile and a half long from lower entrance to end of the USFS designated trail route. The volunteers 'harvested' and bagged weed seed heads and cleared over-and-under growth, fallen branches and trees on about 2/3 of the trail. This improved accessibility for foot and horseback use and reduced weed presence on that non-motorized reach of the trail.

It was a nice day and a great group of workers and friends. Covid issues prevented the US Forest Service folks from joining us, but they were very instrumental in making the day happen. The USFS crews have also done some 2020 weed control in their part of the Bear Canyon Trail and will be following up with more weed management ASAP. Thank you Beartooth Ranger District!

The Bureau of Land Management has the lower half mile or so of the non-motorized trail and annually do some weed work there and may be doing some more yet this year. Thanks too to BLM and the Carbon County Weed District team!

YVAS was permitted by the US Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management to do the work. Together USFS, BLM, Carbon County Weed District and YVAS have done weed control and trail work in previous years and have additional efforts planned for the future. Watch the YVAS Flyer and web site for opportunities to get in on this.

Birding was pretty quiet, as August usually is. Some sign of (black) bear use. Overall the native grasses, shrubs and trees greatly outnumber introduced plant species and it is a real pleasure to visit and work in this part of Bear Canyon. Nice area for Great Basin Wildrye (a splendid and tall native bunchgrass), for impressive Basin Big Sagebrush plants (Photo below) as well as for abundant native deciduous trees, shrubs and conifers.

Special thanks to Jack Sterling, Bruce Waage, Jerry Dalton, Dan DeBar and Steve Regele for the August 2020 work.

Submitted by Steve Regele

The 2020 Crew



L to R: Jack Sterling, Bruce Waage, Dan DeBar and Jerry Dalton (lunch break)

*Steve Regele with Basin Big Sagebrush background,
Great Basin Wildrye foreground*

YVAS PUBLIC PROGRAMS September through May

- ❖ Board of Directors meetings are held the second Monday of each month at 4:00pm. Board meetings are open to all members.
- ❖ YVAS Public Programs are held the third Monday of each month at 7:00pm. *Suspended until further notice.*
- ❖ All meetings and programs are open to the public.

Next Meeting Date:

SEPT 10TH, 2020 at 4:00pm: Board of Directors Meeting

The YVAS September meeting of the Board of Directors will be held at Rose Park from 4 PM to 6 PM.

Rose Park is situated northwest of the corner of 21st St W and Avenue B. The meeting will be held in the tree area north of the Pool. Parking is usually available along 21st St W. Those attending are asked to bring their own chair and of course a face covering.

Please check the website, Facebook, or with a board member for the latest information on meetings.

Yellowstone Valley Audubon Society Officers:

President: Steve Regele, 962-3115, smregele@gmail.com
Vice-President: Steve Linder, 380-0073, becon1@bresnan.net
Secretary: Sue Weinreis, 855-4181, granpeak47@gmail.com
Treasurer: Pam Pipal, 245-4517, ppipal@charter.net

Board of Directors:

Doreen Hartman, 697-0277, rdzhman@bresnan.net
 Carolyn Jones, 670-4449, carolyn684@gmail.com
 Steve McConnell, 661-0422, mcconnells@ci.billings.mt.us
 Sheila McKay, 652-7175, 694-7918, wjhbird@yahoo.com
 Deb Regele, 962-3115, debregele@gmail.com
 Sue Weinreis, 855-4181, granpeak47@gmail.com
 (Phone numbers are Area code 406.)

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

Birdathon: Ruth Vanderhorst, erv132@charter.net, 245-5118
Christmas Bird Count: James Court, custertours@gmail.com, 860-0450
Conservation Advisor: Steve Regele, smregele@gmail.com, 962-3115
Facebook: Nancy Wiggins, nwiggins83@gmail.com, 839-4461
Field Trip Chair: Donn Bartlett, donnbartlett@msn.com, 812-1008
Flyer Editor: Teresa Henderson, yvasflyer@gmail.com, 337-263-7985
Injured Raptors: Montana Raptor Conservation Center, 585-1211
Injured Waterfowl: WJH Bird Resources, wjhbird@yahoo.com, 652-7175
Membership Data: Peter Cummins, membership.data@yvaudubon.org, 248-8684
Mt Bluebird Habitat Project: Carolyn Jones, carolyn684@gmail.com, 670-4449 & Sue Weinreis, granpeak47@gmail.com, 855-4181
Osprey Nest Monitor: Deb Regele, debregele@gmail.com, 962-3115
Osprey Research: Marco Restani, restani@stcloudstate.edu, 425-2608
Public Program Series: Steve Regele, smregele@gmail.com, 962-3115
Publicity: Steve Regele, smregele@gmail.com, 962-3115; Nancy Wiggins, nwiggins83@gmail.com
Recycling (aluminum): Larry Handsaker, 918 Avenue C, Billings, 855-9832
Recycling (baling twine): Deb Regele, debregele@gmail.com, 962-3115 & Doreen Hartman, rdzhman@bresnan.net, 697-0277
Website: Deb Regele, debregele@gmail.com, 962-3115

Membership Updates

Chapter members listed below are up for renewal. 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.

August Outstanding: Donn and Dorothy Bartlett, Steven Linder, Bruce Waage

September renewals: Shari & Robert Dayton, Ann Shesne, Ross & Ginny Waples, Gail McGlothlin

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

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 \$25. If applying for a new or renewing student membership, make check for \$15 and indicate academic affiliation. **PayPal option is also available for renewing or joining YVAS. It can be found on the YVAS Website under Memberships.**

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



R to L: Hairy Woodpecker, Mountain Chickadee, Belted Kingfisher
Photos by Will Crain