

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 Virtual Program: Seeking a Humane Economy November/December 2020

Dave Pauli has been a wildlife rehabber, animal control, wildlife damage control and wildlife educator for over 42 years. The last 30 years here in Billings with The Humane Society of the United States. He is a field responder, disaster responder and travels the globe assisting on wildlife immunocontraceptive or volume capture projects. His Dave Pauli Facebook page gives a daily report of his animal rescue activities.

Dave's 2016 "Ted Talks/YouTube Video" noted in his Program Article below is sixteen minutes short and is educational, interesting, and entertaining. We asked Dave if he would give us an update on that and he graciously did so in the article companion piece to his Ted Talks/YouTube presentation

Seeking a Humane Economy by Dave Pauli

Four years ago, I did my Ted-X talk on the concept of a Humane Economy and how in general humans cannot successfully kill their way to solving wildlife conflicts.

You can see the original Ted-X talk at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1Hm90_5fpQ

I have done a dozen follow-up webinars and zoom presentations on this topic and starting 10/09/2020 my Humane Society of the United States job description shifted from a wildlife Senior field responder to a Project Manager for our Urban Wildlife Humane Neighbors program.

This means I will be working with more private and government agencies and NGO's to help develop realistic plans to coexist and minimize conflicts on the entire range of national and international urban species from deer mice to whitetail deer. My emphasis will be many species that I have routinely worked on like raccoons, pigeons, prairie dogs, turtles, feral pigs, and beavers but as in my past 35 years working with urban wildlife every call and every request could be a unique challenge.

My emphasis will still be based on promoting nonlethal strategies and employing techniques that exclude wildlife or that removes that attractant (food/water/habitat) that attracted the animal(s) to begin with. But another primary message will be to share my lifetime of experiences in having lived on both sides of the "wildlife control" fence and owned and operated a wildlife damage control business that taught me many early lessons about wildlife and human attitudes. One of those key lessons was learned right here in Billings in the late 80's when I was director of animal control and we had an outbreak of skunk rabies. We decided to livetrapped and euthanize skunks in and around school yards, playgrounds, and other areas where skunks and children might come nose to toes. Each year we euthanized almost 200 skunks and as a predecessor to a proposed Progressive skunk contraception program each adult female had a postmortem conducted to show the size of her previous or current litter. In year one the average litter size of these skunks was 4.3 kits per litter. But in just one season of trapping, the year two litter size jumped to 6.8 kits per litter. Meaning Mother Nature was quickly refilling the void we created by actively killing skunks. In year three, we started to treat (birth control), and release treated skunks and to put our rabies control energies into offering low cost rabies vaccinations for dogs and cats. This combo was MUCH more effective than if we were to try to catch and kill even more skunks.



Dave Pauli and a couple of his acquaintances



Continued on page 2



Seeking a Humane Economy by Dave Pauli *continued:*

So, what implications does this have from a birder perspective? Well it has taken me a few decades to begin to accept that this same principle applies to other meso-predators like feral cats. And while I personally promote indoor only cats, and have three cats that live totally enclosed CATIO, I do now recognize that many neighborhoods and communities spent too much energy ineffectively trying to kill their way to feral cat control. Community emphasis should be placed on vaccinating and sterilizing community cats and teaching bird feeders how to place feeders to minimize the effectiveness of feline predators. The bottom line is that yes, cats can be effective predators of all species of small mammals and birds...but that a spayed queen is going to kill a lot less wildlife than a queen that is trying to feed one or two litters a year. Of course, it is not that simple because human factors like property rights and personal preferences come into play. But, just saying, there are ways to train/haze neighborhood cats to stay out of one's yard or hunting bird feeders.

I recognize that many readers will simply not be able to embrace free roaming cats as a species they want to coexist with but I am hoping that most of you will take some initial humane economy step with me and consider doing three other things that will directly save the lives of raptors and other wildlife: 1) Do not buy/use glue traps! These are simply inhumane and cause slow painful deaths for everything from mice to snakes that become entrapped. If you must trap mice the old standard snap traps are more humane than glue traps or poisons. 2) Do not use rodenticides in outdoor settings or places where poisoned mice will be exposed to owls, hawks, and other wildlife. These anticoagulant toxins are killing raptors and scavengers via secondary poisoning. 3) If you hunt gamebirds or large game please switch to non-lead ammo. Lead is toxic to everything that consumes it including humans! We removed it from paint and gasoline for good reasons and there is no reason to introduce it into our wild places and spaces as spent ammo or fishing tackle.

We can all be part of our own small humane economy.

Sparrows, Bluebirds, and Jaguars, Oh, My!!

Hi, Fellow Birders,

Even though YVAS will not be having monthly chapter meetings this year due to "that which shall not be named," I have some ideas to help keep you in the birding mood for the next few months.

I recently watched a terrific ZOOM Webinar entitled "**Little Brown Jobs of SE Arizona: Sparrows and their preferred habitats.**" Almost all the sparrows covered in the presentation are winter residents of Arizona, but come **summer**, they are residents of **Montana**! This FREE webinar is available for viewing until November 24th. Here's what YVAS Board member Deb Regele had to say about it, "Not only a good refresher, it was almost like a mini birding trip but no wind, no snow, no rain and no covid!"

TO VIEW Little Brown Jobs of SE Arizona: Sparrows and their preferred habitats, CLICK HERE or type <https://bit.ly/3jOrEgm> into your browser.

AND THERE'S MORE! Just click on [Home Page](#) (Or cut/paste the following into the search ribbon of your Web Browser: <https://www.swwings.org/>) to register for some of the free ZOOM webinars in the Speaker Series listed below. You can also get information on the 2021 Southwest Wings Birding and Nature Festivals, or even take a 22-minute virtual mini-vacation to beautiful SE Arizona. Have fun!



Submitted by Sue Weinreis

Speaker Series Calendar

2020

- ◆ NOVEMBER 25: Sharing, Caring & Thievery: Arachnid Behavior & Interaction - Jillian Cowles
- ◆ DECEMBER 9: ABCs of Birding Optics - Eric Moore
- ◆ DECEMBER 30: Grassland Plant ID Made Easy - Jim Kowek

2021

- ◆ JANUARY 27: Northern Jaguar Project: Protecting the World's Northernmost Jaguars - Diane Hadley
- ◆ FEBRUARY 24: Bluebirds, Robins and Thrushes - Kathe Anderson
- ◆ MARCH 24: Twelve New Clouds - Glenn Minuth
- ◆ APRIL 28: Wildlife, Rescue, Rehabilitation, Release and Coexistence - Angeline Fahey

WHY FACEBOOK? Why it Matters!

Once upon a time, people used the telephone, television, magazines, newspapers and chats around the water fountain to build strong communities. In 2004 along came a thing called 'Facebook', a FREE social networking service, which added to the communication options. While it caught on rapidly with the younger generation, older folks weren't so interested in sharing everything about themselves, nor did they have the computer skills to do so. But we have aged well, acquired cell phone, computer and internet skills beyond our wildest dreams, discovering ways to stay in touch and build communities with friends, family, organizations, activities, without compromising our own personal information. It's not just a game, it has real value.



YVAS developed a Facebook page in 2015 to share meeting, field trip updates and make birding news available to members and non members alike. It also offers members of the community the chance to ask questions, post photos, or comment about YVAS. Nancy Wiggins, Doreen Hartman and Dorothy Bartlett co-manage the YVAS Facebook postings.

To be 'on Facebook' or access anyone or anything that is, you have to become a member by having your own account or page. To develop a page, log into [facebook.com](https://www.facebook.com) and follow their set up directions or contact Nancy Wiggins, nwiggins83@gmail.com to arrange a personal tutorial.

You don't have to share any personal information on your page, the page with just your name on it allows you to access friends and family who may post photos and stories that you are interested in. Take advantage of moments sitting with friends, children and grandchildren (masked, of course) and have them show you how they navigate FB and why they enjoy it!

Log on to the YVAS Facebook page, see all the news you are missing, and find long lost friends-or they may find you. You can help make us a stronger organization by joining with 'likes' and 'follows' on the YVAS Facebook page. We have about 300 followers - let's double it!

Submitted Nancy Wiggins

FIELD TRIPS

Due to Covid-19, YVAS has decided to SUSPEND our monthly and regularly scheduled 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
406.598.3689

2020 Christmas Bird Count, Billings, Saturday, December 19, 2020

Mark your calendars for the 2020 Christmas Bird Count. It will be a little different this year. National Audubon Society requires that we follow all these requirements:

- Cancel all in-person compilation gatherings.
- Social distancing and/or masking are **required** at all times in the field.
- Carpooling may **only** occur within existing familiar or social "pod" groups.
- Activities **must** comply with all current state and municipal COVID-19 guidelines.

There will be no breakfast at a restaurant, and no compilation meeting in the evening. The individuals in each group will need to make their own plan about where and when to meet, how to handle social distancing/masks, and whether to carpool. It would be a welcome chance to get outdoors and see some birds, and connect with another human.

Please contact Jerry Dalton if you plan to participate. He will coordinate group formation or match you up with a group, assign count areas, coordinate distribution of count maps and return of count results.

All are welcome to participate. You don't have to be an expert birder. You can be paired up with someone who has done your CBC count area before.

Jerry Dalton, daltonlj@centurylink.net, 406 656-3656.

YVAS Board Highlights October 2020

- ❖ The new Montana Audubon Center Director Gabi Morey was present at the October Board of Directors Meeting as a guest. Previously, she served as Education Director for a nonprofit in Colorado for fifteen years. Due to COVID, MAC programs are being held virtually or outside.
- ❖ A \$5000 grant from Watchable Wildlife for the shelter at Clark's Fork WPA has been approved. S Bar S will provide the shelter and Fish Wildlife and Parks will cover the cost of two cement benches at the CF WPA.
- ❖ Fifty big Ag Totes were delivered to the twine collection site and will be available for use at various locations as twine collection vessels.
- ❖ Membership has not dropped this year, as incorrectly reported in last month's Flyer. In fact, membership has INCREASED by seven members! Please help bring in more new members - it really helps in all YVAS efforts

Counting Cranes

The annual coordinated survey of greater sandhill cranes of the Rocky Mountain Population was completed the week of September 21 in the western half of Montana and in parts of Idaho, Wyoming, Utah, and Colorado. These are the cranes that we see around Billings and the surrounding area, as well as westward and northwestward in the state. This survey provides the official index to the population, which numbers around 22,000 in most years. By having a coordinated survey, with everyone doing their part of the survey the same week, it minimizes the chances of cranes being counted twice or not being counted at all.

The overall survey is coordinated by someone from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) in Denver, and that person selects the survey week, sends out instructions to state coordinators, and compiles the final report. The dates are selected to occur at a time when many of the cranes are concentrated in staging areas prior to migration, although there are still quite a few pairs or family groups scattered about. Nearly all of the surveys are done from small planes. Our biologist at Bozeman just switched to a ground survey for Gallatin County because of conflicts with the increased air traffic.

The Montana part of the effort involved surveys of 18 areas across the main nesting range of the cranes, with most of the areas done by Montana Fish, Wildlife, and Parks staff, plus important involvement by the USFWS. The total this year was 9,810, a new record, so we have a good share of the total population. The overall survey total for all of the states will be compiled in the coming weeks. Some of the local areas that are surveyed include a portion of the Clark Fork of the Yellowstone River, along the Mussellshell River from Deadman's Basin west, and areas north of Big Timber.

Cranes were moving and gathering in mid-October during and after the snowstorm and the cold weather that followed, and most of them probably departed for their wintering areas in New Mexico soon after. We can look forward to their return in early March. For me, hearing the first sandhill cranes at that time of the year is a very welcome sign of spring!

Submitted by Jim Hansen



Sandhill Cranes Photo by Brian Henderson



Yellowstone Valley Audubon Society Officers:

President: Steve Regele, 962-3115, smregele@gmail.com
Vice-President: Steve Linder, 380-0073, bscon1@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, rdzlhman@bresnan.net
Carolyn Jones, 670-4449, carolyn684@gmail.com
Steve McConnell, 661-0422, mconnells@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: Jerry Dalton, daltonlj@centurylink.net, 656-3656
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, rdzlhman@bresnan.net, 697-0277
Website: Deb Regele, debregele@gmail.com, 962-3115

YVAS PUBLIC PROGRAMS**September through May**

Next Meeting Date:

NOV 9, 2020 at 4:00pm: Board of Directors Meeting

The YVAS meeting of the Board of Directors will be held from 4 PM to 6 PM. in the **Fellowship room at Mayflower Congregational, corner of Poly and Rehberg, Billings, MT.**

- ❖ 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 programs are open to the public.



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'.

Membership Updates

Chapter members listed below are up for renewal. Please use the application form below (include your email address) and submit, along with a check, to any Board Member or mail it to the address on the application.

November renewal: Stanley Bruce, Robert & Carolyn Jones, Carl & Virginia, Kimmel, Deb Mattern, Susan Weinreis, Johnna Lee Williams

December renewal: Charles & Candace Allen, Will Crain, Marlene & Robert Cushing, Bill DeMeyer, Bob Ehli, Mary Fitzpatrick, Rita Harding, David & Sandy Kennedy, Sheila McKay, Larry Newell, Susan Newell & Dick Walton, Roger Otstot, Barb Pitman, Karl Schmiedeskamp, Hoyle & Jo Anne Setzer, Rhett Smith, Claire & Jack Snyder, Fran Garnett & Jim Snyder, Karen & Robert Stears, Pat Sweeney, Michael Szczutkowski, Tom & Ruth Towle, Pat Vandell, David & Nancy Myers

October outstanding: Georgia Frazier, Robin Manfredi

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





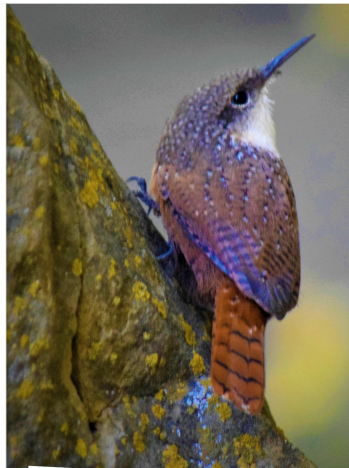
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Have you visited the YVAS Facebook Page?
What are you waiting for?
facebook.com/yvaudubon



Red-shafted Flicker (male) Photo by Will Crain



Canyon Wren and Ruby-crowned Kinglet Photo by Will Crain



Wryneck- a member of the woodpecker family in the UK; feeds mainly on ants taken from both the ground & trees Photo by Tony Cummins