

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.

SEPT 2022

VOLUME 52, NUMBER 8

Wild Neighbors of a Prairie Dog Ecosystem and More- Dave Pauli, Speaker

YVAS is excited to announce that we are resuming our monthly programs and featured speakers beginning in September. This month's speaker is Dave Pauli. Dave is the Project Manager for Wildlife Conflict Resolution with the Humane Society.

Dave will share some of his recent travels to help animals in Morocco, Alaska and Colorado. He will give a short PowerPoint on "Wild Neighbors of a Prairie Dog Ecosystem" including some species you might expect but also several that will surprise you! He will leave time for your questions or comments.

The program will begin at 7:00 p.m. on Monday, September 19, at the Mayflower Congregational Church on the corner of Poly and Rehberg. This program is free and open to the public.

Submitted by Deb Regele



Chirps and Tweets



- ❖ Join us on a fall birding trip or at the September Public Program and receive \$5 off your YVAS family membership. Renew or join in person for \$20.
- ❖ A recent letter from the National Audubon Society addresses the name "Audubon."

Dear Audubon Chapter Leaders,

As some of you may have already heard, National Audubon Society's Chief Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, and Belonging Officer, Jamaal Nelson, recently stepped down from his role due to the sickness of a loved one. Our hearts are with Jamaal at this time.

A search process for a new Chief EDIB Officer will take place over the coming months. Until a new Chief EDIB Officer is identified, I am leading Audubon's EDIB team. The EDIB team remains energized and deeply committed to our internal and external EDIB initiatives.

Contd on page 2

September Birding Trips

Unless otherwise noted, field trips are open to the public and depart at 8:00 a.m. by car from the Rocky Mountain College parking lot on Rimrock Road next to Billings Studio Theater. Passengers will share gas costs. Please DO NOT bring pets. Check the yvaudubon.org website, YVAS Facebook, and the Flyer for the most updated details including cancellations or additional trips. Make transportation arrangements ahead of time if possible. Carpooling cannot be guaranteed due to Covid-19. Please follow Covid-19 safety measures when prudent to do so.

- ◆ September 3 (Sat) - Bridger Creek. Meet at 8:00 a.m. at Itch-Kep-Pe Park in Columbus. Sack lunch. Stan Heath, leader.
- ◆ September 7 (Wed) - Riverfront Park. Meet at 5:00 p.m. at the parking area on the right once in the park. Mike Weber, leader.
- ◆ September 17 (Sat) - Hawk Watch & Red Lodge Area. Meet at 8:00 a.m. at the Red Lodge Town Pump. Sack Lunch. Marco Restani, leader.

There are currently no bird trips planned for October. Please visit our website at yvaudubon.org for additional sites in and around the Billings area.

Submitted by Deb Regele

Chirps and Tweets contd:

One such effort is to provide consultation to a Board Task Force that will examine the name and the legacy of John James Audubon. This initiative is integral to the organization's mission to root itself in equity, diversity, inclusion, and belonging and the need to interrogate our present decisions through the prism of the Audubon that we would like to become in the future.

Seattle Audubon recently announced that they would be removing "Audubon" from their name. We respect the Seattle chapter's autonomy in representing themselves to the community that they serve, just as every Audubon chapter can and does.

The National Audubon Society is still in our process and has not yet made a decision about our name, so I wanted to let everyone know more about the process, where things stand, and what to expect.

A Board Task Force was formed earlier this year and is responsible for making a recommendation about whether or not to change National Audubon Society's name to the entire National Audubon Society Board.

To make that recommendation, the Task Force is executing a scope of work that will provide 4 key inputs: historical research, engagement data, and legal and financial analyses.

The historical research explores John James Audubon's biography; the organization's origin story; the legacies of both the individual and the organization; and the frameworks that institutions can leverage to engage with these histories.

An engagement firm will design and execute a process to listen to where people are, gather feedback, understand the impact of any potential decisions, and provide data and analysis. Key audiences, including staff, donors, members and volunteers, will be engaged in that process.

After considering these inputs, the Board Task Force will present their recommendation to the full Board at the February 2023 Board meeting. At that time, the Board will embark on a decision-making process regarding the Audubon name.

The timeline of this project reflects the enormous scale of the decision. This work must be grounded in the history, current state, and future impact of the Audubon name and the extent to which that name reflects our identity and organizational mission. Recognizing that this decision will affect every single chapter, the Task Force is committed to taking the time to gather input and analysis from all parts of the Audubon network between now and December 2022. Updates will be shared as progress is made.

Thank you for all the work you do for Audubon.

*In community,
andrés*

Submitted by Deb Regele

Big Lake Field Trip August 2022

On a day, not, like any other day in this blistering changing weather, but a day filled with rain, & drizzle for sure. When we met at Rocky for our birding adventure to Big Lake... (a lake fed by two sources but no outlets, entirely rain and runoff fed) ...no one was dampened by the 50F cooler wet weather.

A caravan of birders was hoping to see a variety of species of birds returning from the Arctic Circle and Taiga; returning routes that baffle humans, yet the fledges learn to return... the course is hardwired and accounting for weather ... Big Lake is an oasis on the journey.

Our route took us thru Molt, wound around hill and dale till we came to the NE entry into Big Lake. This is an unmarked entry off the Molt-Rapelje Road. If you are unfamiliar with this entrance, the best way to describe its location is: There is about a 5-mile-long stretch of the Molt-Rapelje Road that runs East-West and parallels Big Lake, which is to the South. Much of Big Lake is obscured from view due to the topography. The best landmark for this entrance is a large pyramid mound of road fill, up on a hill south of the road. As you pass this landmark take the next unmarked road to the left. The road is an all-weather road that heads south, about a mile in you will find a parking area alongside an abandoned railroad track. From here it is a short walk to the northeast shore of Big Lake.

We're wearing rain gear because it's raining ...fortunately it let up from time to time so that I could get my camera, Nikon D3300 in action. Here's a couple favorites from that trip.

From the old railroad bed, we walked down to the waterline of Big Lake. And here we are. This area was teeming with shorebirds, Greater and Lesser Yellowlegs, Baird's, Least, Semipalmated and Western Sandpipers. Long-legged American Avocets and Black-necked Stilts probed the mud. A few Marbled Godwits and White-faced Ibis were observed as well as countless Wilson's Phalaropes, and a handful of Red-necked Phalaropes. The award for the cutest shorebird of the day went to the Semipalmated Plover.



This is a striking photo given the history of this man-made island! To actualize what you see: these American White Pelicans with the exception of the immature pelican flying away, all birds are approximately 8 weeks old! Hatched right here upon a small island of fortuitous prescience, preserved by a Billings area conservation group. Near this island we came upon a feeding flock of Long-billed Dowitchers and a group of over 30 Stilt Sandpipers.

One of the more striking birds was the Black Tern and the quantity. Another familiar buteo was the Swainson's Hawk. We encountered a rather unruly bunch of Cliff and Barn Swallows enroute ~ can't imagine

Birding is such a way of life. We really enjoyed some of nature's bounty on this well lead Big Lake ~ catching the early birds from the breeding grounds in the far north, early; thank you Mike Weber, and all who came to catch the early birds too.

We'd like to pitch for radio communications, for several monitors who frequent our fabulous YVAS birding expeditions, to bring a hand full of radios to our caravans out of YVAS kitty. Probably a dozen would suffice.

Submitted by Will Crain & Mike Weber



One of my favorite things to photograph :::> American White Pelicans in action over head. The gray patch on top of its head indicates immature. Perhaps a kiddie care assistant that many birds employ when hatch/fledgling time rolls around.



News and Updates

During the summer break in YVAS activities medical issues changed my abilities to serve the Board of Directors. I resigned as president in August. As expected the Board will fill the position in good time and is unified in keeping YVAS strong and on mission.

I may be able to continue on some projects as a YVAS member volunteer but will not be continuing on as an active Board Member.

I have a great admiration for the Society and its mission, the Board of Directors and the Members, and friends. I have enjoyed and truly appreciated my tenure on the Board. I look forward to more birding, and to "... promote enjoyment and protection of the natural environment through education, activism, and conservation of bird habitat."

Thanks,
Steve Regele
August 22, 2022

I wanted you all to know that I have resigned as Chair of the YVAS Birding Committee and will no longer be involved with birding trips. I will of course continue to support the remainder of the trips scheduled for this year.

Also, a big thank you to the trip leaders....none of this happens without you.

And thanks to all the field trip birders....it has been a pleasure to bird with and get to know you.

Here's to good birding,

Donn Bartlett

In the next few months YOUR Yellowstone Valley Audubon Society may be going through some changes and we will need your help. No, we're not asking for money, only some of your time and input. Our board of directors is down to 7 members which is still legal, but a couple of other board members would certainly help with keeping Audubon running and relevant. The board meets once a month August through May. Starting in September, the board will be discussing what people want from an Audubon membership, how to attract new and younger members, and what changes people would like to see. Do you have some ideas or want to participate in these discussions? Please contact any board member with your input and volunteer! We need YOU.

Board member's emails and phone numbers are at the back of this flyer.

Thank you from the Board of Directors.

Submitted by Carolyn Jones



This silly Juvenile Osprey was doing handstands but would not fly. He fledged the next day.

Submitted by Dorothy Bartlett

Errata

On page 1 of the August '22 flyer, the last name of Lauren Hansen and Jim Hansen were misspelled.

YVAS MEETINGS & PUBLIC PROGRAMS

Next Board of Directors Meeting: September 12, 2022 —The YVAS meeting of the Board of Directors will be held from 4pm to 6pm. Board of Directors meetings are held the second Monday of the month. Board meetings are open to all members.

In-Person Program September 19, 2022. Programs will be held on third Monday of the month at Mayflower Church on the corner of Rehberg Lane and Poly Drive in Billings. Doors open at 6:30 PM, the program begins at 7:00 PM

Board of Directors

President (Acting): Steve Linder 406-380-0073 becon1@bresnan.net

Vice President:

Secretary: Sue Weinreis 406-855-4181 granpeak47@gmail.com

Treasurer: Pam Pipal 406-245-4517 ppipal@charter.net

Board Members

Doreen Hartman 406-697-0277 rdzlhman@bresnan.net

Carolyn Jones 406-670-4449 carolyn684@gmail.com

Steve McConnell 406-661-0422 mcconnells@ci.billings.mt.us

Deb Regele 406-200-7873 debregele@gmail.com

Montana's Congressional Delegation to the US Congress:

Senator Steve Daines

www.daines.senate.gov

Billings: 406-245-6822 Wash DC: 202-224-2651

Senator Jon Tester

www.testersenate.gov

Billings: 406-252-0550 Wash DC: 202-224-2644

Representative Matt Rosendale

https://rosendale.house.gov/contact

Billings: 406-413-6720 Wash DC: 202-225-3211

Committees and Assignments

Christmas Bird Count: Jerry Dalton 406-656-3656 daltonlj@centurylink.net

Conservation Advisor:

Facebook:

Field Trip Chair:

Flyer Editor:

Injured Raptors:

Injured Waterfowl:

Membership Data:

Mt Bluebird Habitat Project:

Osprey Nest Monitor Coord:

Osprey Research Coord:

Program Committee:

Publicity:

Recycling (aluminum):

Recycling (baling twine):

Website:

Doreen Hartman 406-697-0277 rdzlhman@bresnan.net

Teresa Henderson 337-263-7985 yvasflyer@gmail.com

Montana Raptor Conservation Center 406-585-1211

WJH Bird Resources 406-652-7175 wjhbird@yahoo.com

Peter Cummins 406-248-8684

membership.data@yvaudubon.org

Carolyn Jones 406-670-4449 carolyn684@gmail.com

Sue Weinreis 406-855-4181 granpeak47@gmail.com

Deb Regele 406-200-7873 debregele@gmail.com

Marco Restani 460-425-2608 restani@stcloudstate.edu

YVAS Board of Directors

YVAS Board of Directors

Larry Handsaker 406-855-9832 or 918 Avenue C, Billings

Deb Regele 460-200-7873 debregele@gmail.com

Doreen Hartman 406-697-0277 rdzlhman@bresnan.net

Deb Regele 460-200-7873 debregele@gmail.com

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

⇒ Sept renewal: Ross & Ginny Waple

⇒ Aug outstanding: Pat Crisp, Martha Crofts, Stephen Linder, June Luptak, Joann Sanderson

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?

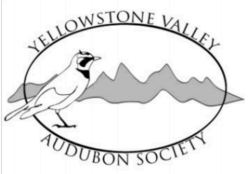
☐ YES ☐ NO

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



Above: Photo from Mary an Osprey monitor in the Paradise Valley. The last couple of years, Ospreys that she monitors actually perch on roof tops. It's an uncommon sight!



Photos by Tracy Enterline

Above: Red-headed Woodpecker sitting on a branch in one of my neighbors yard.

Left: Mountain Bluebird Fledgling Stretching her wing in my backyard on a antique piece of gardening equipment.

Both images were taken August 2022.