

*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.*

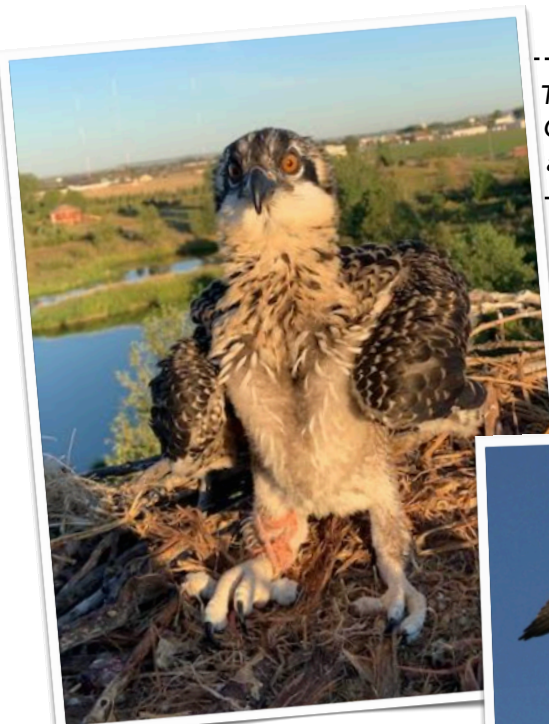
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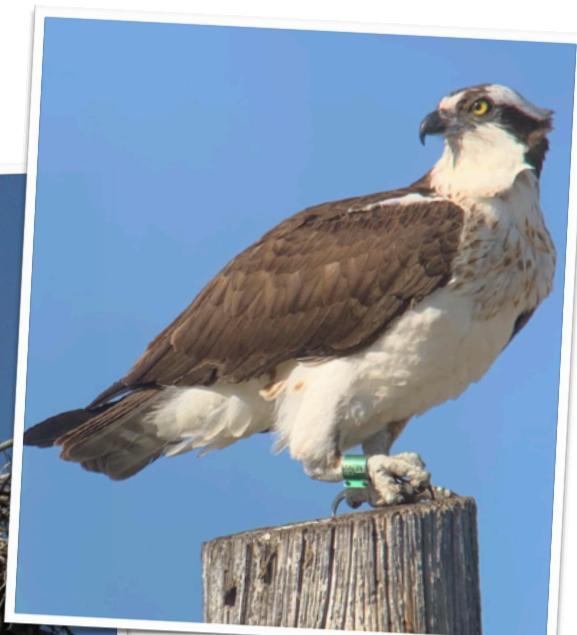
### **The Yellowstone River Osprey Project: A Volunteer Effort!**

In 2009 a few members of Yellowstone Valley Audubon initiated a field study of Ospreys. They were interested in monitoring the distribution and abundance of the local population, and in helping management agencies and electric utilities reduce human-Osprey conflicts. That first year 3 members found 22 nests. Today over 40 volunteers monitor nearly 100 nests from Gardiner to Miles City in collaboration with power companies, landowners, and government agencies. This presentation will describe how nest monitors are trained to become proficient in Osprey observation and data collection. From the efforts of these dedicated volunteers, you will learn where Ospreys produced along the Yellowstone River migrate and spend the winter, how long they live, where they settle to breed, and their lifetime reproductive success. You will also learn how many electrocutions and twine entanglements occur each year, and the management to reduce these mortality factors. The Osprey population along the Yellowstone River continues to increase and the project is in need of additional volunteers. If you are curious about science, have some spare time each week during spring and summer, and might like to become an Osprey nest monitor, please consider attending this presentation.

*Marco Restani coordinates the research component of the YVAS Osprey Nest Monitoring Project. He is a Biologist at NorthWestern Energy where he leads the company's Avian Protection Program. Prior to returning to Montana, he was Professor of Wildlife Ecology at St. Cloud State University in Minnesota.*



*The program will begin at 7:00 p.m. on Monday, January 16th at the Mayflower Congregational Church on the corner of Poly and Rehberg. This program is free and open to the public.*



### An Incomplete Summary of Billings Christmas Bird Count

Like election night, not all the returns are in yet for the December 17 Audubon Christmas Bird Count. With 93% of the results in, we have 53 species. There were 33 field birdwatchers, and 16 feeder watchers, one a newborn's Mom. We started out with a sunny, 20 F morning with a 10-mph wind, and progressed to a sunny, calm, 30 F afternoon.

The following species were seen by only 1 or 2 groups, usually in small numbers. Bufflehead, Hooded Merganser, Wild Turkey, Double Crested Cormorant, Great Blue Heron, Cooper's Hawk, Ferruginous Hawk, American Kestrel, Merlin, Virginia Rail, Mourning Dove, Belted Kingfisher, Hairy Woodpecker, Yellow Shafted Flicker, Northern Shrike, Pinyon Jay (46), Pygmy Nuthatch (8), Bohemian Waxwing (50), American Tree Sparrow, White Winged Junco, and Song Sparrow.

Half of these species are not difficult to identify, you just need to be in the right place at the right time. So reserve Saturday, December 16, 2023, for the next CBC. The more birdwatchers, the more right time/right place times we can have.

*Submitted by Jerry Dalton*

### Field trip to the Yellowtail Afterbay

The Nov. 5 field trip to the Yellowtail Afterbay was very windy though not terribly cold. Unfortunately, it also rained while we were there, but guess what? Ducks don't care! (They probably had a good laugh watching us. For sure, some species do sound like they're laughing :-)

The afterbay had a good variety of water fowl: Mallards, Gadwall, Am. Wigeon, Ringneck Ducks, L. Scaup, N. Pintail, Redhead, Bufflehead, Ruddy Duck, Common Goldeneye, Red-breasted Merganser, Canada Geese, Am. Coot, a Common Loon, Pied-billed Grebe, Western Grebe. Scoters had been seen recently at Cooney, but we saw none at the afterbay.

Joining me were Stan Heath, Susan Hovde, Raylene Wall, and Mike Lesnik. We saw very few hawks on the day but did enjoy quite a few eagles and over 30 species total.

*Submitted by Brian Henderson*

### **Meet Your YVAS Board of Directors: Carolyn Jones**

*Where are you from and what was/is your profession?*

Carolyn: I'm from Richmond, Virginia, and my profession is Chemistry, but I worked at many other jobs before I got a Chemistry job in Billings.

*What bird hooked you into birding?*

Carolyn: The "bird" that got me hooked on birding was Norm Schoenthal. I loved his ornithology class so much I took it twice.

*What is your favorite Montana bird species?*

Carolyn: The white-faced ibis.

*What is a conservation topic that you are excited about right now?*

Carolyn: The conservation topic that interests me is getting Two Moon and Riverfront parks cleaned up of invasive species.

*What is your favorite/funniest/most interesting piece of Wildlife Trivia?*

Carolyn: The badger and coyote. They have a symbiotic relationship when hunting. They work together to hunt, then share.

*What do you like best about YVAS?*

Carolyn: Being part of a community of people who enjoy being outdoors and watching birds.

*Where is your favorite place to go birding in Montana?*

Carolyn: One place that never fails to have interesting birds is Broadview ponds.



*Submitted by Sue Weinreis*



### Chirps and Tweets

- ◆ The YVAS Board of Directors is pleased to announce that we have two new members. Welcome Kristin Neva and Bruce Waage!
- ◆ This is Teresa Henderson's last issue as editor of the YVAS Flyer. Beginning with the February 2023 issue, Kristin Neva will be the new editor. Thank you Teresa for your excellent work the last couple of years!
- ◆ Upcoming programs and speakers can now be found on the YVAS website at [yvaudubon.org](http://yvaudubon.org). The program lineup is confirmed unless otherwise noted although last minute changes may occur. Programs are the third Monday of each month September through May at 7 PM at the Mayflower Church.
- ◆ Did you know that there are six bird-friendly ranches in Montana that sell online locally or nationally? [Check out National Audubon's newsletter](#)

*Submitted by Deb Regele*

YVAS MEETINGS & PUBLIC PROGRAMS

Next Board of Directors Meeting: JAN 9, 2023 —The YVAS meeting of the Board of Directors will be held from 4 pm to 6 pm. Board of Directors meetings are held the second Monday of the month. Board meetings are open to all members.

In-Person Program: JAN 16, 2023. Programs will be held on third Monday of the month at Mayflower Church on the corner of Rehberg Lane and Poly Drive in Billings. Programs are held the third Monday of the month. Doors open at 6:30 pm; the program begins at 7:00 pm.

Board of Directors	Committees and Assignments
President (Acting): Steve Linder 406-380-0073 beconl@bresnan.net	Christmas Bird Count: Jerry Dalton 406-656-3656 daltonlj@centurylink.net
Vice President:	Conservation Advisor:
Secretary: Sue Weinreis 406-855-4181 granpeak47@gmail.com	Facebook: Doreen Hartman 406-697-0277 rdzlhman@bresnan.net
Treasurer: Pam Pipal 406-245-4517 ppipal@charter.net	Carolyn Jones 406-670-4449 carolyn684@gmail.com
Board Members	Kristin Neva 406-672-8912 yvasflyer@gmail.com
Doreen Hartman 406-697-0277 rdzlhman@bresnan.net	Montana Raptor Conservation Center 406-585-1211
Carolyn Jones 406-670-4449 carolyn684@gmail.com	WJH Bird Resources 406-652-7175 wjhbird@yahoo.com
Steve McConnell 406-661-0422 mcconnells@ci.billings.mt.us	Peter Cummins 406-248-8684
Kristin Neva 406-672-8912 ksneva@gmail.com	membership.data@yvaudubon.org
Deb Regele 406-200-7873 debregele@gmail.com	Mt Bluebird Habitat Project: Carolyn Jones 406-670-4449 carolyn684@gmail.com
Bruce Waage 406-698-3126 bruce.waage@outlook.com	Sue Weinreis 406-855-4181 granpeak47@gmail.com
Montana's Congressional Delegation to the US Congress:	Deb Regele 406-200-7873 debregele@gmail.com
Senator Steve Daines	Osprey Nest Monitor Coord: Marco Restani 460-425-2608 restani@stcloudstate.edu
www.daines.senate.gov	Osprey Research Coord: YVAS Board of Directors
Billings: 406-245-6822 Wash DC: 202-224-2651	Program Committee: YVAS Board of Directors
Senator Jon Tester	Publicity: Larry Handsaker 406-855-9832 or 918 Avenue C, Billings
www.testersenate.gov	Recycling (aluminum): Deb Regele 460-200-7873 debregele@gmail.com
Billings: 406-252-0550 Wash DC: 202-224-2644	Recycling (baling twine): Doreen Hartman 406-697-0277 rdzlhman@bresnan.net
Representative Matt Rosendale	Website: Deb Regele 460-200-7873 debregele@gmail.com
https://rosendale.house.gov/contact	
Billings: 406-413-6720 Wash DC: 202-225-3211	

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.

- ❖ Jan renewal: Jim & Virginia Court, Jerry & Lois Dalton, Larry & Janice Handsaker, Jim Hartung, Karen Heil, Aiko Kawano, Steve McConnell, Linda Pickard, Lisa Ranallo, Mike Weber
- ❖ Dec outstanding: Tanner Bloom, Mary Fitzpatrick, Polly Gordon, Rita Harding, Hunter Jackson, Sheila McKay, Larry& Marlene Newell, Jo Anne Setzer, Teresa Ericfkson, Tom & Ruth Towe, Gene Wade

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



Photos by Tracy Enterline  
Above: Black-billed Magpie with snow falling  
Top right: Townsend's Solitaire  
Bottom: Pinyon Jay Preening