



# 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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## New This Issue

- Black-and-White Warbler Profile
- Conservation Grants
- Georgia Frazier Update
- Audubon Adventures
- Upcoming Events

## Montana's Birds and Wildlife in a Warming World— And You!

The effects of global warming are already visible across Montana's landscape: beetle-killed trees, glaciers retreating, birds moving north, and wetlands drying. What does the science say is in store for Montana? And what can we do to help? Join Amy Cilimburg, Director of Bird Conservation for Montana Audubon, at the Oct. Chapter Meeting, to learn how climate change is impacting our birds and wildlife and how the efforts of Auduboners and friends can help safeguard our natural resources.

She will discuss the importance of our riparian and wetlands in a changing climate, focusing on the Important Bird Areas (IBA) Program and opportunities for local involvement. Healthy resilient habitats will be key for bird populations as we move forward, and the Yellowstone River features prominently in conservation efforts.



Amy will give a slide show that highlights not just climate impacts but also what we can do to reduce global warming pollutants.

### Inside this issue:

<i>This Month's Chapter Meeting</i>	1
<i>Meetings Schedule</i>	1
<i>Officers and Committees</i>	2
<i>Membership Forms</i>	7
<i>Field Trip Schedule</i>	8

### YVAS Meetings

**All YVAS Meetings are at Mayflower Congregational Church, corner of Rehberg Lane and Poly Drive, unless otherwise noted.**

**Monday, Oct. 12th, 6:30pm: Board Meeting**

**Monday, Oct. 19th, 7:00pm: General Membership Meeting**

**We will be holding a YVAS fundraiser dinner before the general membership meeting. Jeannette Davis has volunteered to organize October's dinner: call her if you would like to bring food and for dinner reservations at 656-7618.**

**Note: dinners will now start at 5:45 so diners have enough time to turn in dishes to kitchen help by 6:30.**



☞ We're on the web! [www.yellowstoneaudubon.org](http://www.yellowstoneaudubon.org)

### News From the YVAS Board

Periodically, I will replace “From the Editor” with a “News from the YVAS Board” article to help keep you informed about the board’s work as it continues to be active in keeping YVAS involved in various projects within our community.

This past summer Monty Sullins, along with Robert Lubbers, George Mowat and others, surveyed Osprey nest platforms to establish the number of active nests in the Billings area as well as successful fledgling rates. Last month, Robert wrote an article for the Flyer about their progress. The board discussed the need for this project earlier this year, and we have been successful in taking the first steps in what will be an ongoing project. Next year, we hope to be more involved in looking at Osprey nest sites further east in Montana.

The *Montana Bird Distribution* book, which breaks up the state into small blocks (called quarter/quarter latilongs—QQLL) is being revised, and the YVAS board has plans to adopt a QQLL (or more), which would require our commitment to observing and then reporting bird sightings within the specific area. Individuals can also adopt a QQLL. For more information, go to the Montana Audubon website: [www.mtaudubon.org](http://www.mtaudubon.org) or email Janet Ellis at [jellis@mtaudubon.org](mailto:jellis@mtaudubon.org)

Jeanne Olson is the new YVAS representative and Deb Regele and Rita Harding are the new YVAS alternate representatives to the Montana Audubon (MA) Board. Jeanne and Deb recently travelled to Missoula to attend the MA Board meeting and came back with information about the Important Bird Area (IBA) Program, which MA is committed to working on throughout Montana. The YVAS board is looking forward to working with MA to identify and then establish an IBA along the Yellowstone River to help preserve critical habitat for Red-headed Woodpeckers as well as other bird species. (continued bottom of page 3)

#### Yellowstone Valley Audubon Society Officers:

**President:** Ruth Vanderhorst, 245-5118, [acrvc@bresnan.net](mailto:acrvc@bresnan.net)

**Vice-President:** Dick Moore, 656-6241

**Secretary:** Jeanne Olson, 656-7278

**Treasurer:** George Mowat, 656-7467, [gmowat@bresnan.net](mailto:gmowat@bresnan.net)

**Past-President:** Kayhan Ostovar, 256-7481, [kayhan@q.com](mailto:kayhan@q.com)

#### Board of Directors:

Rita Harding: 259-7586, [mtroses22@bresnan.net](mailto:mtroses22@bresnan.net)

Robert Lubbers: 245-2970, [rslubbers@q.com](mailto:rslubbers@q.com)

Deb Regele: 962-3115, [dregele@juno.com](mailto:dregele@juno.com)

Monty Sullins: 656-5242, [ssullins@bresnan.net](mailto:ssullins@bresnan.net)

Nancy Wiggins: 651-0218, [nancyhwiggins@hotmail.com](mailto:nancyhwiggins@hotmail.com)

#### Montana’s Congressional Delegation:

**Sen. Max Baucus:** U.S. Senate, Wash. D.C. 20510

website: <http://baucus.senate.gov>

email: [max@baucus.senate.gov](mailto:max@baucus.senate.gov)

Billings: 657-6790 Wash. D.C.: 1-800-332-6160

**Sen. Jon Tester:** U.S. Senate, Wash. D.C. 20510

website: <http://tester.senate.gov>

email: [senator@tester.senate.gov](mailto:senator@tester.senate.gov)

Billings: 252-0550 Wash. D.C.: 1-866-554-4403

**Rep. Dennis Rehberg:** U.S. House of Rep. Wash. D.C. 20515

website: [www.rehberg.house.gov](http://www.rehberg.house.gov)

email: [denny.rehberg@mail.house.gov](mailto:denny.rehberg@mail.house.gov)

Billings: 256-1019 Wash. D.C.: 202-225-3211

#### Committees and Special Assignments:

Archives and History.....open

Audubon Adventures.....Jeannette Davis 656-7618

Bird Questions.....George Mowat 656-7467 or  
Helen Carlson 248-8684

Christmas Bird Count.....Helen Carlson 248-8684  
or Billie Hicks 962-3798

Editor.....Jeanne Olson, [editor@yellowstoneaudubon.org](mailto:editor@yellowstoneaudubon.org)

Greeters.....Phyllis Holt 252-7373  
Audrey Jurovich 656-2748

Injured Raptors.....Robert Lubbers 245-2970

Membership Secretary.....Ruth Vanderhorst,  
245-5118, [acrvc@bresnan.net](mailto:acrvc@bresnan.net)

Recycling (aluminum).....Tom Davis 656-7618

#### Website:

Mark Gale.....[webmaster@yellowstoneaudubon.org](mailto:webmaster@yellowstoneaudubon.org)

**Meetings** are held September through May at Mayflower Congregational Church, corner of Poly and Rehberg:

- Board Meetings held second Monday of each month at 6:30pm. Board Meetings are open to entire membership.
- General Chapter Meetings are held third Monday of each month at 7:00pm. All meeting are open to the public.

## Black-and-White Warbler

The Black-and-White Warbler is my new favorite bird since the YVAS fieldtrip to NorthEastern Montana at the end of August. This renegade warbler neither looks nor behaves like other warblers. Often called the black-and-white creeper or creeping warbler, it creeps along tree trunks and branches in the manner of Brown Creepers and Nuthatches. Its striped black-and-white crown and back distinguish it from these species. This coloring is distinctive in all plumages, keeping it off the pages of “confusing fall warblers” and making it my new favorite bird.

The Black-and-White Warbler nests on the ground in mixed woodlands. The eggs of all the wood warblers follow one general pattern of coloration. The ground color is light—white, creamy, pale blueish- or greenish—white. They are more or less spotted with browns, lavenders, and lilacs, chiefly around the larger end, where they form a “wreath.”

The song of these warblers is a series of thin, squeaky, high-pitched notes in a rhythmic cadence of “wee-see” phrases.

The breeding range of this intriguing warbler is from

the southeast Yukon east through central Ontario, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia and Newfoundland and south to eastern Texas, Louisiana, central Alabama and northern Georgia. Its western U.S. breeding range includes South Dakota and the northeastern corner of Montana. It winters from Mexico to Venezuela and in Florida, the Bahamas and West Indies.

If the Black-and White Warbler is not on your life list, I recommend a trip to the little city park in Westby, Montana to see it.

—Pat Larmoyeux

### Resources:

A Natural History of American Birds of Eastern and Central North America (Forbush and May)

A Field Guide to Warblers of North America (Dunn and Garrett)

The Sibley Guide to Birds

### Board Continued . . .

Amy Cilimburg from MA will speak to our chapter next month about global warming and IBAs, and in November Steve Hoffman, executive director of MA, will meet with the YVAS board to plan our cooperative work on this project. We will keep you abreast about our work with IBAs, and if you would like more information or would like to be more involved, please contact a board member.

Another project we have established within the last year is the Conservation Grants (see page 5). We continue to support the Audubon Conservation Education Center (ACEC). Dick Moore is the YVAS representative to the ACEC Advisory Board, and he keeps us up to date about happenings there so we can in turn relate them to you. See page 6 for Open House Information.

Other Board Activities: Robert Lubbers is the new Program Chair, and he has a year of interesting speakers scheduled for us. We are planning the Annual Christmas Potluck Banquet (see bottom of page 4 for date/place/time). And we are helping to continue the dinners before chapter meetings while distributing the work more equitably. You will notice that Jeannette Davis has agreed to organize the dinner for Oct. Please let President Ruth Vanderhorst know if you are interested in organizing dinners for upcoming months.

The YVAs board is going to purchase a brick (or more) for the ACEC Heritage Walkway, and we are accepting donations. We are also accepting donations for a thank you gift for Georgia Frazier. If you would like to contribute to either of these, send your donation to YVAS Treasurer, P.O. Box 1075, Billings, MT 59103—1075 and mention what you would like that donation to be used toward.

Do feel free to contact a board member if you would like more information about any of the board’s activities, and look for board updates in upcoming issues of the flyer.

—editor

## Westby/Northeast Montana Field Trip

On Thursday, August 27th, ten of us (Helen Carlson as our leader) left Billings on a four day trip to the northeast corner of the state to see warblers and other migrating birds. We first headed to Miles City, hoping to see a Wood Duck; we were rewarded with a couple dozen Wood Ducks in the city park. Birding was fairly slow the rest of the day, but at Medicine Lake we saw a Black-Crowned Night Heron, Black Terns, Eared and Western Grebes. We arrived that evening at Plentywood, where we were greeted by Bart Whelton, a birder from Spokane Helen had befriended last year in Westby.

Early the next morning we headed for Westby and saw a beautiful Swainson's Hawk perched on a pole. We spent the rest of the day in the tiny city park watching warblers and other birds come down to the dripping water feature. Bart alerted us to a Magnolia Warbler early on. Ted Nordhagen, the resident Westby bird expert, joined us periodically throughout the day and provided great conversation as well as pointing our attention to a female Rose-breasted Grosbeak and the Blackburnian Warbler. All together we saw nine species of Warblers: The Tennesse, the Yellow, the Wilson's, the Black-and-White, the Orange-crowned, the Chestnut-sided, the Magnolia, the Blackburnian and the American Redstart. Other highlights, besides the Grosbeak, were an Olive-sided Flycatcher, Alder Flycatcher, Red-eyed Vireo, and Swainson's Thrush.

Early the next morning we took a quick trip back to Westby and saw a Prairie Falcon flying overhead as we pulled into town, but other birds were not yet active, so we took our leave and headed southwest towards Fort Peck. Halfway between Culbertson and Wolf Point on Highway #2, we lost sight of George and Bernie Mowat. A quick call on the radio told us they were about a mile behind us with car trouble. We all turned back to join them, and after George called for a tow truck, we pulled out our lawn chairs and coolers and enjoyed a fun lunch by the side of the highway. I think some locals thought we were quite a sight as many slowed down to gawk at us while going by. The tow truck arrived and took the George and the Mowat car to Sidney, while Bernie continued on with us.

At Fort Peck we were thrilled to see a Ruby-throated Hummingbird come to the feeder in Chuck and Jean Carlson's backyard. We also enjoyed watching a Bluejay stash peanuts in the grass. And we especially enjoyed eating rich cookies Jean had baked for us. Then we were on to Malta for our last night out.

The next morning we headed out to Bowdoin Wildlife Refuge and on the way saw a field of White-faced Ibis, Marbled Godwits and Long-billed Dowitchers. Then a Cooper's Hawk sped by, chasing a small bird, and all the birds few away. Driving around Bowdoin, we got a good comparison view of three Greater Yellowlegs feeding next to three Lesser Yellowlegs. We also got nice looks at a Baird Sandpiper and a Least Sandpiper, so close it almost ran across Helen's shoe. We made a quick trip into Zortman, where we saw both Mountain and Black-capped Chickadees, and then headed to Billings. We arrived home Sunday evening, tired but happy. We ended up seeing 100+ species. George ended up spending 2 1/2 days in Sidney and returned home Tuesday with a fixed car.

—Jeanne Olson

### SAVE THE DATE

**The Yellowstone Valley Audubon Society's Annual Christmas Potluck Banquet will be held Monday, Dec. 7th, 2009 at 6:00pm. The Potluck will be held at the Billings Masonic Center, the same setting as last year. Important details will be forthcoming at chapter meetings and in the Nov/Dec. Flyer.**

## Yellowstone Valley Audubon Conservation Grants

This year the Yellowstone Valley Audubon Society will be awarding Conservation Grants to students engaged in some project which supports the Society's mission: "to promote enjoyment and protection of the natural environment through education, activism and conservation of bird habitat."

Grants of up to \$500 each will be awarded for a variety of projects, such as helping to fund research on birds, plants, habitat, alternative energies, etc. Grants could be used to fund field work projects, such as habitat restoration, building bird or bat boxes, as well as monitoring bird populations, etc. They could be used to fund travel, continuing education or advocacy for natural resources. We would like to receive as many applications as possible, thus if you know of students whose interest/work fits the purpose of these grants, please encourage them to apply.

Two grants are to be awarded this year. The grants are available to fund individual or group/class projects for students from Eastern Montana's colleges and Billings area high schools. Grant applications should be received by November 15, 2009. They should include a brief statement of the proposed project, illustrating how it ties in with the YVAS mission as stated above. Applications should not exceed one page in length and need to identify the student's academic affiliation. The application must have an attached budget, illustrating how the student would apply the funds. A letter of support from a faculty member would strengthen the application. Any applicant under the age of 18 must provide a letter of support from a supervising teacher. Grant applications should be sent to Yellowstone Valley Audubon Society Board, P.O. Box 1075, Billings, MT 59103-1075. For further information, contact YVAS President, Ruth Vanderhorst at 245-5118 or [acrv@bresnan.net](mailto:acrv@bresnan.net)

Yellowstone Valley Audubon Society is able to establish this grant program because of the generosity of donors, over the years, to the McDonald-Norling Memorials. These memorials have been combined to form the McDonald-Norling Endowment Fund. We encourage donations to that fund so we can continue to offer and hopefully increase our grants. If you wish to make a donation, please send it to the YVAS Treasurer, P.O. Box 1075, Billings, MT 59103-1075 and mention McDonald -Norling Fund on your check.

## Georgia Frazier Update

Georgia Frazier has left us for the humid area close to her beloved Mississippi Flyway where she grew up. She is already becoming familiar with the secret hiding places of birds in the area and is out hunting down fall migrants at every opportunity.

Georgia is a long time member of Yellowstone Valley Audubon Society and gave of herself and her knowledge with the greatest generosity. She served the organization in whatever role was needed, whether it was as President, Secretary, Editor, Board Member, Program Chairperson, Field trip leader, Manager of the Christmas Potluck, fundraiser for the ACEC, and the many other duties we cannot name in this limited space.

If you went bird watching with Georgia, you know how she crept into the area to make sure she did not disturb the birds so all of us could enjoy them. She has a great ear for birdsong and recognizes so many of their songs and calls. She always takes such delight in seeing birds, from the most common to the rare and unusual. Her skills as a bird watcher are again too many to list here.

Georgia lead the Annual Eagle Count and participated with multiple routes in the spring Breeding Bird Survey. We expect Georgia to return to Montana periodically when she can to participate in whatever bird activity we have going on. In the meantime, **we want to Thank You Georgia for your years of hard work and good friendship. We miss you!**

Georgia may be contacted at 5659 West Stone Farm Rd., Edgerton, WI 83534-8509 or by phone at 608-884-3685. She would appreciate hearing from you.

## Audubon Adventures

The following teachers are receiving the Audubon Adventures classroom sets for the school year 2009-2010. Also see comments from some of the teachers as well as sponsors/donors.

**Arrowhead Elementary**—Jennifer A. Smith (grade 3)

**Big Sky Elementary**—Mark Berg (grade 5) and Linda Bayne (grade 5)

**Bitterroot Elementary**—Tammie Erickson (grades 3 & 4) and Mary Hankins (grades 3 & 4)

**Blue Creek Elementary**—Julie McNeil (grade 5)

**Burlington Elementary**—Ann Brucker (grade 4)

*"My students have enjoyed the Audubon Adventures articles this year, especially in the way they have been able to make connections with our adventures to the Audubon Conservation Education Center and our animals unit in science. Thank you!"*

**Central School (Roundup)**—Jim Helgeson (grade 5)

**Central Heights**—Zoe Twichel (grade 4)

**Elder Grove**—Vicky Green (grade 4) and Mrs. McMorris (grade 4) [both classes sponsored by Tom and Jeannette Davis]

**Elysian School**—Linda Greunenfelder (grade 3) [sponsored by George and Bernie Mowat]

**Independent School**—Denice Haines (grade 5) and Lori Ler

**McKinley Elementary**—Kim Busch (grade 4) and Pat Lowthian (grade 4) *"We love using them. Thanks again!"*

**Meadowlark**—Christy Mayer (grade 4), Jill Wagenhals (grade 4), and Kathleen Anderson (grade 4)

**Orchard Elementary**—Tawna Robinson (grade 3), Susanne Collum (grade 3), Alyssa Cox (grade 3), and Jodi F. Ervin (grade 3) *"Thanks so much! The students so enjoy the Adventures!"*

**Poly Drive Elementary**—Charlie Bokum (grade 4)

**Ponderosa**—Julie Winkler (grade 4)

**Roberts Elementary**—George Nelson (grades 5 & 6) *"Thank you for doing this for us all these years!"* [sponsored by Phyllis Holt]

**Rose Park Elementary**—Robin Manfredi (grade 4) [sponsored by Bernard Rose]

**Uinta Meadows School (Evanston, WY)**—Janalee Hamblin [sponsored by Helen Carlson]

## Audubon Conservation Education Center Update

The Audubon Conservation Education Center (ACEC) is gearing up for a busy fall. Thanks to generous support from the EPA and Audubon/Toyota Together Green grant programs, the ACEC is expanding its signature school-based education program—Audubon Naturalist in the Schools (ANTS). ACEC naturalists Heather Ristow and Carol Ward have put together a great program this year. Please contact them if you are interested in volunteering or simply observing the program: [hristow@mtaudubon.org](mailto:hristow@mtaudubon.org)

We are also gearing up for the dedication of the new facility at the ACEC—the Norm Schoenthal Field Lab. The Yellowstone River Parks Association is putting the finishing touches on the building while Audubon is installing phase one of the habitat gardens and outdoor amphitheater. The first bricks for the Heritage Walkway will be installed. Purchasing a bricks is a great way to support the ACEC, and they are still available for purchase. Please go the Montana Audubon website to download a brick order form: [www.mtaudubon.org](http://www.mtaudubon.org)

**The ACEC will host an Open House for Yellowstone Valley Audubon Chapter Members on Saturday, Oct. 31st from 1-3pm. Please come out to tour the facility and learn more about our programs. The ACEC is located off of S. Billings Blvd: south of I-90 and north of the Yellowstone River. Look for sign on the west side of S. Billings Blvd.**

### Membership Information

1. As many of you know, we offer membership in YVAS as Supporting Chapter Members for \$20.00 per year. We do this to help pay the costs of membership. Although the National Audubon Society gives complimentary membership in our chapter as a benefit, no dues come to us. Therefore, we strongly encourage you to join our chapter as Supporting Chapter Members. Use the bottom application form on the right to join as Supporting Chapter Members or to renew your chapter member.
2. An application for *initial* membership in the National Audubon Society is also printed in each YVAS Flyer (see application form on top right). If you are NOT a member of the NAS and wish to be, please use this form to join and send it, along with the fee, to the address provided. Our chapter will then receive payment for recruiting a new member.
3. Please note the address label on your issue of the Yellowstone Valley Flyer. The date your membership *expires* is listed on the top right line of the label. Please renew chapter memberships when due using the form in the Flyer. Renewal of NAS membership is NOT handled by the chapter. You should renew directly with the NAS.
4. Moving??? Please let us know as early as possible since the Post Office does not forward the Flyer. They send it back to us for a fee of up to \$2.00. So, please let us know when you plan to move. Include your old address as well as your new address so we can track you. You may write, call, or email the information.
5. Do you receive more than one copy of the Flyer? If so, it is unintentional. Please let us know so we can prevent that from happening.
6. If you have questions or problems related to membership, let me know either by phone or email: 245-5118 or acrv@bresnan.net.

—Ruth Vanderhorst, Membership Secretary



© Marie Read

National Audubon Society

Recruitment Code: C9ZN500Z

Application for New Membership

Please enroll me as a member of the National Audubon Society. I understand that I will receive the Audubon Magazine and Yellowstone Valley Audubon Society Flyer. Make check payable to **National Audubon Society**. \*Renewals will be sent to you through National Audubon.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_

State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address \_\_\_\_\_

One Year Membership

- \$20 One year new membership
- \$15 Initial membership for Senior and Students

Send this application and your check made out to **National Audubon Society** to:

Yellowstone Valley Audubon Society  
 Attention: Membership Secretary  
 P.O. Box 1075  
 Billings, MT 59103-1075

Yellowstone Valley Audubon Society



Recruitment Code: C9ZN500Z

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 Chapter benefits. Make check payable to Yellowstone Valley Audubon Society for \$20.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_

State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address \_\_\_\_\_

Send this application and your check to:

Yellowstone Valley Audubon Society  
 Attention: Membership Secretary  
 P.O. Box 1075  
 Billings, MT 59103-1075



**YELLOWSTONE VALLEY FLYER**

P.O. Box 1075  
Billings, MT 59103-1075

**Non-Profit Organization  
PRST STD  
U.S. POSTAGE  
PAID  
BILLINGS, MT  
PERMIT NO. 27**

ADDRESS SERVICES REQUESTED

### **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. 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.*

**Nov. 7th (Sat) Yellowtail Dam Afterbay. 8:00am-6:00pm. Leader: George Mowat.**  
Bring a sack lunch.

**Dec. 19th (Sat) Christmas Bird Count: More details to follow in the Nov/Dec Flyer.**

**Fieldtrip Chairs: George and Bernie Mowat, 656-7467**

