

OCTOBER MEMBERSHIP MEETING

Last Chance Audubon Society will meet on Tuesday, October 21, at 7:00 pm in the large meeting room of the Lewis and Clark Library.

The October program – *Natural History and Ecology of Raptor Migration Through Western North America*—will be presented by Steve Hoffman.

With the Autumn Bridger Mountain Hawk Watch just getting underway, why not learn more about this unique flyway and how the information being gathered there is helping us to understand the status and migration behavior of raptors throughout the region. What do we know about the spring and fall movement patterns of our hawks, eagles and falcons through the West? What about the eagles and hawks passing over the Bridger Mountains each fall – where do they come from, and where are they going? What hazards do the birds face along the way? How often do they stop to hunt, and do they deposit “pre-migratory fat” like many other birds? How far do they go in a day, and over the course of the season? What makes the Bridger Mountains such an important flyway for eagles and other raptors? Why don't they use the same flight path in both spring and fall? These are just some of the many questions Steve will try to answer with his presentation.

Steve Hoffman, Executive Director of Montana Audubon, has dedicated his life to wildlife conservation. He started his career as a Wildlife Biologist for the BLM and later worked for the US Fish & Wildlife Service. After nine years of government service he left to create HawkWatch International (HWI), a not-for-profit organization dedicated to monitoring and conserving hawks, eagles and other birds of prey. While there he set up the Bridger Mountain Hawk Watch. After 12 years with HWI he became the Director of Bird

Conservation for Audubon Pennsylvania. He later moved to Bozeman to serve as Executive Director of the Predator Conservation Alliance. He has been the Executive Director of Montana Audubon since 2006.

ANNUAL BIRDSEED SALE

Last Chance Audubon Society, in partnership with Birds & Beasleys, is now taking orders for the chapter's annual birdseed sale. This is a chance for you to stock up on seed for your feathered winter guests and at the same time help our chapter raise money for educational and conservation projects. All profits from this sale go to LCAS.



- 25# black oil sunflower seed - \$23.00**
- 25# medium chips – \$40.00**
- 10# nyjer thistle - \$19.50**
- 20# nyjer thistle - \$37.00**
- 25# millet - \$17.00**

Place your order by Oct. 21 with Sue Jackson, 443-4486, or Sandy Shull, 449-0904, or at the Oct. membership meeting. Pick up birdseed at Birds & Beasleys, 70 S. Park Ave., between Oct. 28 & Nov 8.

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2008 BIRDATHON RESULTS from Jo Lace

Birdathon was very successful in 2008. We raised \$4,554.92, which is over \$2,000 more than 2007. This increase was due, in part, to the phone calls that we made to our members. The phone calling aspect of Birdathon is a work in progress and we will try to iron out the wrinkles for next year.

There were three teams in 2008.

-- *100 Species-100 Miles* – Coburn Currier along with Scott Storey and Karen did the birding for this team and found 100 species in only 10 hours while driving just 53 miles. This is impressive work! Janice Miller and Lorna Milne (of the Sage Hens) teamed up with *100-100* to raise approximately \$1,000.

-- *Bigfoot & Baldy* – Sara Toubman and Cedron Jones birded in late June, driving from Mount Edith back to Helena. They had the highest count with 108 species—a pair of White-throated Swifts being one of their great sightings near Avalanche Gulch. *B&B* raised about \$1,400 for Birdathon this year.

-- *Brother, Can You Sparrow Dime?* - We conducted our Birdathon on May 24 and 25, generally in and around Helena. We counted 99 species including 3 Black Terns at the Asarco Pond and Bobolinks (a perennial favorite) on Duffy Lane. Our visibility was intermittent, as we also counted 1.3 inches of rain during the day. We raised \$2,100.

-- *100 in 100* – drove the least distance: 53 miles.

-- *B & B* – counted the most species: 108.

-- *BCYSD* – raised the most money: \$2,100.

Again, a very successful Birdathon, and our thanks to everyone who made a pledge and everyone who made a call to members.

If you would be interested in helping with the member calls next spring, or if you have ideas about making Birdathon better, give me a call (443-6640). We'll meet and discuss next year's effort sometime in late winter.

Again, thanks to everyone who helped to make our 2008 Birdathon such a success!



Last Chance Audubon promotes understanding, respect and enjoyment of birds and the natural world through education, habitat protection and environmental advocacy.

2008 BIRDATHON REPORT

from Coburn Currier

We had a good Birdathon. We walked the neighborhood early, then went to Spring Meadow State Park, picked up Bullock's Oriole, Black-headed Grosbeak, Lazuli Bunting, Least Flycatcher, among others. Then we went to the Fairgrounds pond and got a Northern Waterthrush. We then drove into the valley and stopped at Forestvale Cemetery (Pinyon Jay, Merlin, Mountain Chickadee) and Lorna Milne's house (Eurasian Collared-Dove, Western Kingbird). We then went to the Causeway, Black Sandy State Park, Hauser Dam. Finally we went to the Regulating Reservoir where we picked up our 98th, 99th, and 100th species (Grasshopper Sparrow—new quarter latilong observation). At that time we had only driven 45.2 miles, and including the drive back into town, we completed 100 species in less than 10 hours and only drove about 53 miles.

14-DAY SUBTROPICAL SOUTH AFRICA BIRDING ADVENTURE

January 13-16, 2009

This is the trip of a life time. The price of this 2-week trip, assuming 6-10 participants and INCLUDING \$500 per participant to Montana Audubon Society, which is tax deductible, is \$3,949 for double occupancy at 3-star accommodations. For single occupancy the cost is \$4,443. This includes all transport, accommodation, food, and guiding fees, but excludes: the international flight arriving in Durban and departing from Johannesburg two weeks later, drinks, tips, gifts, and other items of a personal nature.

The tour provides a representative sample of the very best African birding and can be combined with the 8-day Western Cape Birding Tour. Huge numbers of species will be seen. The typical bird list for this 2-week adventure is among the very highest in the world—in the range of 400 species. We will also find large numbers of South African endemics. Apart from yielding hundreds of bird species, this dream African experience also provides the possibility of seeing lions, cheetahs, leopards, elephants, rhinos, crocodiles, hippos, giraffes, antelope, plus many other mammal species, as well as breathtaking scenery.

If you are interested in reading the daily itinerary or in signing up for this trip, call or e-mail Mary Fay, 406-431-9761 / mary.fay@bresnan.net. With limited time, your quick reply is necessary.

BIRDNOTE: FLAMMULATED OWL CITIZEN MONITORING IN THE HELENA AREA: A FOLLOW UP by Amy Cilimburg

This past summer, the Avian Science Center (ASC) continued and expanded the Flammulated Owl citizen monitoring program initiated the previous year. We once again surveyed for owls around the Missoula area and began a new effort in and around the Helena area. We did this with significant and cheerful assistance from Denise Pengeroth, Helena National Forest biologist, and Sandy Shull from *Birds and Beasleys* (where the equipment boxes were housed) and with great enthusiasm from members of the Last Chance Audubon Society and friends.

In May we held an extensive training session at the Helena National Forest office with over 20 attendees. Volunteers, working in pairs, agreed to “adopt” a route to survey and conduct nighttime surveys, using GPS units to navigate to established points along roads. At each point volunteers played a Flammulated Owl call using a broadcast caller and recorded any responses by owls. Early summer wet weather was not always conducive to owling, but volunteers did their best! All in all, 18 volunteers surveyed 11 transects, 4 of these twice, and approximately 15 Flammulated Owls were detected. We are currently assessing ways to improve our program. We hope in future seasons to spend more time upfront ensuring that routes and specific points are appropriate, practicing with the better GPS units, and perhaps a bit more training on data forms. We look at this as a pilot season for the Helena team and do hope to return with a new and better citizen monitoring program next year (funding permitting of course).

Why long-term monitoring for owls? If we can track where owls live and how consistently we find them in a given area over the years, we can better understand habitat needs. We know Flammulated Owls need large trees, open areas for foraging for moths, dense patches for protection while roosting, and large snags with woodpecker holes for nesting. As we monitor where owls live, we can look for these key habitat elements and help educate others about these needs, especially the importance of keeping our large wildlife snags standing.

At the ASC, Amy Cilimburg spearheaded all efforts. She is now working with Montana Audubon and hopes to collaborate with the ASC in order to continue and expand the program. Kristina Smucker is now the ASC lead and is collating the data and updating the website. See http://avianscience.dbs.umt.edu/research_landbird_flam.htm for more of the story. Thanks for your interest and support. Feel free to get in touch with questions or ideas. Amy Cilimburg (amy@mtaudubon.org) Kristina Smucker (Kristina.smucker@mso.umt.edu).

ANNOUNCEMENTS & COMING EVENTS

--**The LCAS Silent Auction** will be held at the November and December meetings. If you have something to donate please call Jo Lace, 443-6640, or Sandy Shull, 449-0904.

--**Birds & Beasleys is continuing to lead Saturday morning field trips.** Meet at Birds & Beasleys, 70 S. Park Ave. on Saturdays at 7:30 am. Field trip destination changes weekly. Call on Thursday if you'd like to know where they are going, 449-0904.

--**Kelsey Chapter of the Montana Native Plant Society:** Thursday, October 9, 7:00 p.m. Scott Mincemoyer, botanist with the Montana Natural Heritage Program, will present a program on “The Rare Plants of Montana.” The presentation will look at the surprising and oft-overlooked plant diversity in Montana with a focus on the many interesting and lesser known rare plants, including several plants not found outside of the state. Free to the public at the Lewis and Clark Library.

--**LCAS Christmas Bird Count: This year's count will be held on Sunday, December 14.**

Please mark your calendars and see the November/December newsletter for details.

--**Montanans for Corporate Accountability** will show the film *Money as Debt* on Monday, October 13, at 7 pm at the Neighborhood Center, 200 S Cruse Ave. in Helena. This 47-minute animated documentary by Paul Grignon explores the fundamental relationship between money and debt in our "fractional reserve" banking system and how that system evolved and became, in the view of some critics, a modern version of the story of the sorcerer's apprentice. The concepts covered in *Money as Debt* provide an essential foundation for understanding the current economic meltdown—and for questioning the limited scope of proposals to address it. There will be a discussion following the film—seeking ways to conjure up the old sorcerer so he (and we) can put a stop to this mess. This event is free and open to the public.

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Mon-Sat 9:30am-6pm
Wed until 8pm
Sundays 11am-4pm

Birds & Beasleys
70 S. Park Ave.,
Helena, MT 59601
406-449-0904
www.birdsandbeasleys.com

**Last Chance Audubon Society
Membership Form**

Name _____

Address _____

City/State/Zip _____

Phone _____ E-mail _____

Please send your \$15 check and form to Last Chance Audubon Society, PO Box 924, Helena, MT 59624.
All contributions are tax deductible.

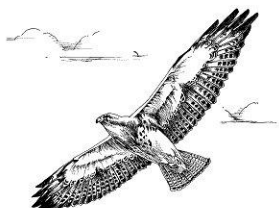
**November/December Newsletter Deadline:
Monday, Nov. 3. Thanks!**

LAST CHANCE AUDUBON SOCIETY

Officers:		Christmas Count	Sue Newell-442-8142/Cedron Jones 442-1271
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Martha Vogt	495-9270	Program	Sara Toubman 442-1271
Committee Chairs/Contacts:		Publicity	Jim Greene 495-9270 - greenevogt@imt.net
Birdathon	Jo Lace 443-6640	Silent Auction	Sandy Shull-449-0904/Jo Lace-443-6640
Birdseed Sale	Sue Jackson-443-4486/Sandy Shull-449-0904	Website	Christian Frazza

LCAS Website: www.lastchanceaudubon.org. Contacts: Birdseed – Birds & Beasleys, 449-0904; Shade Grown Coffee – Joyce Beckes, 458-8170; Montana Audubon – 443-3949 / www.mtaudubon.org. Non-members may receive the newsletter for \$5.50 per year. Send check to LCAS, PO Box 924, Helena 59624.

**LAST CHANCE AUDUBON SOCIETY
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