

Bitterroot AUDUBON



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NEWSLETTER

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BIRDS TELL US THAT IT IS TIME TO ACT

From Montana climate projections to Montana birds to Montana climate solutions: Where do we go from here?

By Amy Cilimburg



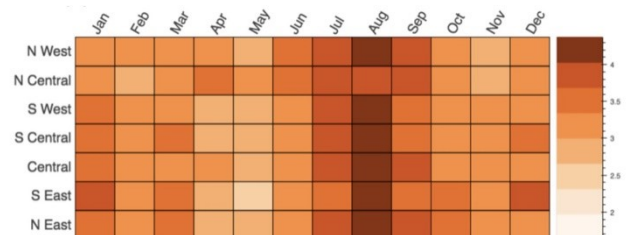
Lolo Fire & Smoke.

Courtesy Paul Willet

We're increasingly exposed to dire climate reports from all over the world. Our birds and wildlife are on the brink. We're seeing rollbacks to federal environmental protection. Yet amidst all this there's a palpable shift happening around the world. Youth voices are emboldening new activists who are energized to act on climate and conservation. Nature-based solutions and the value of forests will increasingly be part of what we do. How can we in Montana weave together actions that work for people and wildlife and build a livable future? It is time for Bitterroot Audubon members and other concerned citizens of the Bitterroot Valley to take meaningful action! Join Bitterroot Audubon Monday, October 21st, to learn from an expert about what is happening and what we can do.

Amy Cilimburg, one of the founders of Climate Smart Missoula, the non-profit she helped launch four years ago, will share some insights based on her years of researching Montana birds and her experience understanding climate impacts and working on climate solutions. She'll speak to

Change in Monthly Avg. Temp. (°F)



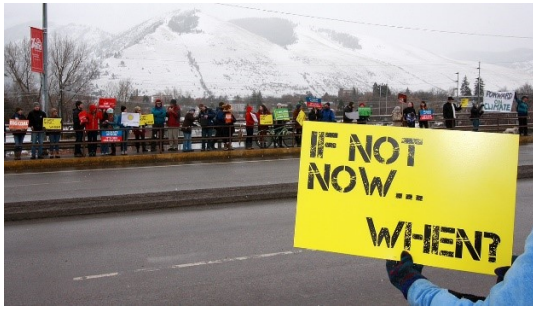
Courtesy Amy Cilimburg

current local climate resiliency and mitigation efforts, particularly from Climate Smart Missoula. Climate Smart is the outgrowth of community efforts to take action on climate and Amy will showcase this collaborative initiative and how other communities can grow new, localized efforts. She will also connect this work to new statewide climate work. Finally, she promises to leave us not with despair but with hope.



Courtesy Amy Cilimburg

Amy helped launch Climate Smart Missoula in 2015, following efforts to develop Missoula's Climate Action Plans and has worked on climate and energy policy and conservation for over a decade. As the Executive Director of Climate Smart Missoula, she advocates for climate solutions and



Courtesy Amy Cilimburg

works to build networks and community resiliency. Prior to this she was the Director of Bird Conservation for Montana Audubon for seven years and prior to that, co-directed the University of Montana's Avian Science Center. Amy has a MS degree in Wildlife Biology from the University of Montana where she studied Yellow Warblers in the Bitterroot! She's Board Chair of Missoula's Mountain Line bus system, is on the Board of the Missoula Chapter of Montana Conservation Voters, and was recently appointed to the Governor's Climate Solutions Council. Amy lives, birds, and runs in the Rattlesnake north of Missoula with her family.

Bitterroot Audubon invites members and the public to hear Amy on Monday, Oct.21, 7PM at the Forest Service Building, 1801 North 1st (north end of Hamilton, west side of HWY 93). Enter the building on the west side. Contact Becky Peters for additional information, 369-5210.



Courtesy Mike Daniels

Letter from the President

By Becky Peters, BAS President

Many of you have seen the report from the journal *Science* about the loss of bird populations since 1970.

www.sciencemag.org/news/2019/09. Yes, it is disconcerting and saddening: Some bird species living along shorelines down by 33%, and bird species in grasslands down by 53%; 19 common



species have each lost more than 50 million birds in the last 50 years (sparrows, warblers, finches, blackbirds, meadowlarks, dark-eyed juncos, horned larks, even starlings and house sparrows) Some reasons why? Habitat loss, use of pesticides, climate crisis, increase in biofuel crops such as corn and palm oil, increase in coastal development, etc. This is a "wake up call" the scientists say. We recovered the bald eagles and other raptors when we took on the DDT insecticide makers. So conservation groups know we can do it again. They have come up with a 7 Step Action Plan for us, the everyday person. Like they say, these are simple steps and I will be touching upon each one of them throughout my

Calendar of Events

- Oct 15:** Highway Clean-up, meet at Bell Crossing, 4PM.
- Oct 21:** Audubon Meeting/Program "Climate Smart Missoula" by Amy Cilimburg, Forest Service/DNRC Building, Hamilton, MT, 7PM, Board Mtg. 5PM.
- Nov 18:** Audubon Meeting/Program "Raptor Rehab/Wild Skies Raptor Center" by Brooke Tanner, Audubon Meeting, Lee Metcalf NWR, Stevensville, MT, 7PM, Board Mtg. 5PM.
- Dec 14:** Hamilton Christmas Bird Count, Teller Wildlife Refuge, 7:30AM.
- Dec 28:** Stevensville Christmas Bird Count, Stevensville Ranger Station, time TBA.
- Jan 20:** Program TBA, Forest Service/DNRC Building, Hamilton, MT, 7PM, Board Mtg. 5PM.
- Jan 2020:** Big Hole Christmas Bird Count, details TBA.
- Feb 17:** Audubon Meeting/Program "Fossil Hunting" by Jill Davies, Forest Service/DNRC Building, Hamilton, MT, 7PM, Board Mtg. 5PM.
- Mar 16:** Audubon Meeting/Program "Harlequin Ducks & Climate Change" by Chris Hammond, Audubon Meeting, Lee Metcalf NWR, Stevensville, MT, 7PM, Board Mtg. 5PM.
- Apr 20:** Audubon Meeting/Program "Grassland Birds, Wildlife & Ecology" by Kristy Blye, Forest Service/DNRC Building, Hamilton, MT, 7PM, Board Mtg. 5PM.
- May 18:** Audubon Meeting/Program "MPG Ranch: History & Research" by Kate Stone, Audubon Meeting, Lee Metcalf NWR, Stevensville, MT, 7PM, Board Mtg. 5PM.
- Summer 2020:**
Wings Across the Big Sky Birding Festival, TBA

President Letters during this year. Some of the steps we have mentioned before but they are worth mentioning again. I'm hoping that we can get very specific about what we BAS members can do right at our homes and apartments, here and now! I hope you will join us!

Seven Simple Actions To Help Birds:

<https://www.birds.cornell.edu/home/seven-simple-actions-to-help-birds/>

1. Make Windows Safer, Day and Night
2. Keep your Cat Indoors
3. Reduce your Lawn Size, Plant Natives
4. Avoid Pesticides
5. Drink Coffee that is Good for Birds
6. Protect Our Planet from Plastic
7. Watch the Birds and Share What You See

So let's start with #3 first. Reduce your Lawn Size and Plant Natives. Your large manicured lawn is literally **CONCRETE** to birds –it supplies no food or shelter, except for the robin's worms. Now how would you like to reduce your watering, mowing, fertilizing, and of course you aren't putting any pesticides on your lawn or garden anyway, right? Then that means you would probably like to increase nectar, seeds, berries and insects to feed our birds, add shelter for them and at the same time create a garden to help pollinators? Great! Check out these very useful links as you contemplate tearing up some of your lawn this fall:

www.audubon.org/native-plants, and

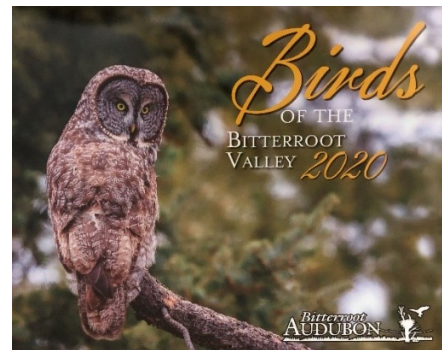
<http://millionpollinatorgardens.org>. We have some BAS members who would like to help you if you live here in the Bitterroot. This team will come to anyone's home to work with you on how to lessen your lawn area and increase your native plants. To be clear - we are not landscape designers, we will just have information to get you started and then

come out later with a **Certificate of Bird and Pollinator Appreciation!!** Do you live in a condo or apartment? Then let's look at what native plants you can hang out a window, etc. Our aim is to Help the birds and pollinators. If you are interested let me know by emailing me rpeters@montana.com with subject line: Help The Birds and Pollinators! Thank you! Let's get going because time is awastin'! Cities and counties and states are getting involved. Like Mayor Farrenkopf of Hamilton has rightly stated "It's time to talk about the birds and the bees."

The Bitterroot Audubon 2020 Calendar is here!!

By Becky Peters, BAS President

The Bitterroot Audubon has the perfect calendar for your family and a perfect gift for you to send to loved ones. It is lightweight, packs easily and shows off the beauty of the Bitterroot so well. It is our 2020 Calendar with some photos of our stunning avian friends that live here. Wait till you see the beauty of these birds! The photos were taken by talented Bitterroot photographers, with drawings of birds by Lone Rock 4th graders. These useful and informative calendars are only \$20 and the proceeds from our only fund raiser stay here in the valley for Bitterroot Audubon's work on conservation, education and scholarship projects. You can't find another calendar that does that! Help a local non-profit help the valley's habitat and wildlife! **Make sure to get your calendars at these stores: Florence Ace; Stevensville Ace; Stevensville Valley Drug and Variety; Corvallis Merc; Hamilton Gifts; Chapter One; Bitterroot Drug; and Robbins' Hallmark. Thank you for helping our birds and wildlife!**



Save the Dates for the Christmas Bird Counts!

By John Ormiston

It's time to think about Christmas Bird Counts and polish those binoculars and spotting scopes. The Hamilton 33rd Annual CBC will again start at the Teller at 0730 on December 14th, the earliest date a count can be scheduled. Mel Holloway has graciously volunteered to replace retired Compiler John Ormiston to breathe some new life into the annual effort. Hope we can have an outstanding turnout of counters to have a fun day. The Stevensville CBC, still compiled by Dave Lockman, will meet at the Stevensville Ranger Station on December 28th. One more opportunity to help Bitterroot Audubon sponsored counts is the Big Hole effort done in the first week of the New Year.

Scholarship Committee Update

By Skip Horner

With great pleasure Bitterroot Audubon announces Andrea Williams as the winner of this semester's Byron Weber Memorial Scholarship. Andrea is from Stevensville, and is majoring in Wildlife Biology at UM. Andrea came to our recent Board Meeting and our General Meeting, and spoke well about her life and her studies. We are very proud of her, the more so because she happens to be the younger sister of Philip Williams, our very first scholarship recipient. We give this scholarship twice a year to student studying a Natural Resources



**It's here again! Our Highway Clean-Up!
Come meet your friends on Tuesday
October 15 @ 4PM @ Bell Crossing, west
side.**

**Bring gloves & dress smart.
We supply bags & flashy vests.
Please come! The Valley is watching.**

major at a Montana college or university. Preference is given to a Bitterroot resident. The money for the scholarship comes from our calendar sales, so buy a calendar or two and support higher education.

What's the story, Story?

By Jim Story

Question: *I commonly see robins and flickers dead on the highway but never dead blackbirds, and yet the latter often nest close to a road. Why is that?*

Answer: The answer to that question has not been determined to my knowledge, but I can offer a possible answer. It all depends on the bird species' instinctive response to an approaching car. Birds like robins and flickers often fly across the road when a car approaches,

with often-lethal results, while Brewer's Blackbirds tend to fly away from the road. It is not a matter of intelligence; rather it is due solely to a programmed instinctual response. My theory is that Brewer's Blackbirds, when approached by a car, instinctively fly to the nearest cover, which will usually be away from the road. Maybe robins and flickers instinctually prefer to flee across bare ground (road) where there is better visibility. So, the short answer to the longstanding question, "Why did the chicken cross the road?" may simply be: it's a programmed instinctual response.

Local birding expert Jim Story answers your questions about birds and their habits. Jim welcomes your questions at jstory4689@gmail.com.

News and Notes

Call for Photos

Bitterroot Audubon is seeking images of birds for a feature in our newsletter: *Bird Shots*. If you have taken a great photo and would like to submit it for consideration, please email the jpeg image, with a brief description, to BASeditors@gmail.com.

Bitterroot Audubon is on Facebook and Instagram

If you use Facebook or Instagram, please look for Bitterroot Audubon and "Like" us!

Bird Shots



Courtesy Mike Daniels
White-breasted Nuthatch.

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Vice-Pres.	Mike Daniels*	
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At large	Judy Hoy*	777-2487
At large	Susan Nelson*	
	Michele Falivene (Mimi)*	

* Board Member

EMAIL: contactus@bitterrootaudubon.org

WEBSITE: www.BitterrootAudubon.org

INSTAGRAM: @bitterroot_audubon
and on Facebook!

Chapter Only Membership

The Bitterroot Audubon Chapter Only Membership is \$15/year. These members will be supporting local chapter activities, receive the full color e-newsletter, and enjoy Chapter benefits. To join as a Chapter Only Member, complete this form.

Name: _____
Address: _____
City: _____
State: _____ Zip: _____
Email: _____

Send this application with \$15 to:



Bitterroot Audubon Society
PO Box 326
Hamilton, MT 59840-0326

NATIONAL AUDUBON SOCIETY MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION



Audubon

Renew or Sign up
for your
National Audubon Membership at
Audubon.org