

Important Bird Areas

Bitterroot Audubon is working with Montana Audubon to promote and develop the Important Bird Area (IBA) program in our region. For more background on the IBA program in Montana and in other places, please visit Montana Audubon's website: <http://mtaudubon.org/birds/areas.html> Bitterroot River Important Bird Area Bitterroot Audubon has recently adopted the Bitterroot River Important Bird Area. This IBA encompasses the 500-year floodplain around a 50 km stretch of the Bitterroot River from Woodside (just north of Hamilton) to just south of Lolo. The Bitterroot River IBA also includes the Lee Metcalf National Wildlife Refuge. More than 240 bird species were found in the initial surveys of the Bitterroot River IBA, with at least 115 species breeding. The numbers of Lewis's woodpeckers (42 pairs in 2006) and red-naped sapsuckers (47 pairs in 2006) exceeded the respective thresholds for an IBA of continental significance. Surveyors found other species of conservation concern, including the bald eagle, northern harrier, Wilson's phalarope, short-eared owl, pileated woodpecker, willow flycatcher, and red-eyed vireo. Get involved! Here are a few ways YOU can get involved in the Bitterroot River IBA:

- Help us improve our IBA checklist. Look at our current species list, then submit your observations (include species, date, location) using the "Contact Us" feature of this website
- Sign up to do a bird survey at one of the many public access sites in the IBA. These include places like fishing access sites, county roads, and county parks.
- If you own property within the boundary of the IBA, invite someone from BAS to come and help you do a bird survey. Find out what you have! If you would like assistance improving bird habitat on your property, we have resources available to help you.
- Pay attention to our events calendar or sign up to be on our field trip email list to take part in field trips within the IBA.
- Challenge members of the Bitterroot Audubon Society to find certain birds or certain numbers of birds by sponsoring them in our Bird-a-thon. For example, you pledge \$1 for every Lewis's woodpecker found in our 2009 breeding season surveys. Use the Contact Us feature of this website to let us know you are interested!!