

17th ANNUAL
MONTANA AUDUBON
BIRD FESTIVAL

June 3–5, 2016
Holiday Inn Downtown
Missoula, Montana

wings 
MONTANA
AUDUBON
across the big sky



Kate Davis

welcome

The 17th Annual Wings Across the Big Sky Festival, co-hosted by Montana Audubon and the local Five Valleys Audubon Chapter, in cooperation with Bitterroot Audubon, is shaping up to be a spectacular event! We hope you will join us in Missoula, June 3–5, 2016, for dynamic birding field trips, interesting speakers, a wide variety of informational booths, and many other fun festivities as we celebrate efforts to conserve our birds and wildlife in Montana. We will be highlighting Montana Audubon's 40th Year as part of the weekend's activities.

Take a minute to peruse this brochure for information on our Festival headquarters, our speakers, and our fantastic birding field trips and non-birding tours to help you decide how to spend your fun-filled weekend in and around Missoula.

Festival headquarters and lodging

The Holiday Inn Missoula Downtown is located at Riverfront Park along the Clark Fork River. The hotel offers 200 spacious guest rooms, 20,000 square feet of flexible meeting space, a park-like outdoor venue, and full service Brooks & Browns Bar and Grill. With the best location and superior conference service, groups are guaranteed a distinctive Missoula experience. Complimentary features include: Airport and area-wide transportation, parking, wireless internet, indoor pool and fitness center. The address is 200 S Pattee St. (just south of Main Street and easily accessed from either the Van Buren or the Orange Street I-90 exits).

Rooms are available for \$97 per night. Please phone 1-406-721-8550 or 1-800-399-0408 and mention Montana Audubon (code MAS) to receive this special discounted rate. We suggest that you book early, especially if you are planning to arrive early or stay late for the extra field trip opportunities. The hotel will honor the pricing as long as there are rooms available.

The Holiday Inn Downtown proudly supports Montana Audubon and looks forward to welcoming you in June!

keynote speaker

Erick Greene will be speaking Friday evening about his fascinating research with songbirds and how they communicate to alert each other when dangers from various potential predators are detected. Saturday afternoon he will present on his Osprey research and what it means for the health of the Clark Fork watershed.



Erick is a professor in the Division of Biological Sciences and in the Wildlife Biology Program at the University of Montana. He grew up in Quebec, Canada, with twin passions for music and nature. He first became interested in music of the Renaissance and Baroque periods, and later in jazz. Erick dropped out of high school and lived for a year in the Galapagos Islands, helping with studies of Darwin's Finches. He then worked for five summers on seabirds, 800 miles north of the Arctic Circle.

Erick completed his undergraduate studies at Dalhousie University in Halifax, Nova Scotia, focusing on biology, music and mathematics. He worked on Ospreys in Nova Scotia for his undergraduate senior thesis. He later received his Ph.D. from Princeton University. Erick has been able to combine his interests in music and biology by studying how animals use sounds to communicate with each other. These studies in bioacoustics show that many animals convey complex information with their vocalizations. He has also come full circle and returned to studying Ospreys. In addition to his academic research, Erick is passionate about teaching and public outreach. He has been awarded the Most Inspirational Teacher Award, Distinguished Teacher of the University of Montana, National Outstanding Teacher Award from the Montana Board National Honor Society, Tom Boone Town and Gown Award for public outreach, UM Teaching Across the Curriculum Award, and Arnold Bolle Award for Lifetime Achievement in Conservation.

Overview

FRIDAY

1:00 p.m. Registration
4:30 p.m. Welcome by Mayor John Engen and Evening Program
7:00 p.m. Keynote Speaker
8:30 p.m. Field Trip

SATURDAY MORNING

5:00 a.m. Breakfast with field trip groups and leaders, Field Trips

SATURDAY AFTERNOON

12:45 p.m. Afternoon session begins with speakers Kate Davis, Jeff Marks, American Prairie Reserve, and Erick Greene

SATURDAY EVENING

5:30 p.m. Banquet

SUNDAY MORNING

5:00 a.m. Breakfast with field trip groups and leaders, Field Trips

(Look for information on page 6 regarding pre- and post-festival field trips sponsored and facilitated by Five Valleys and Bitterroot Audubon chapters.)

Festival Carbon Footprint and You

Included with your registration is an opportunity to offset your carbon footprint travelling to and from the Festival. We once again invite you to donate toward our goal to achieve carbon neutrality at the Montana Audubon Center.

field trips

Come with your water bottles and comfortable walking shoes; we are offering a diverse selection of birding and non-birding trips at this year's festival.

Please review each trip described on pages 3–6 and make your choices. We have one trip scheduled for Friday night this year; it is dependent on the weather and is labeled “FRI.” Saturday trips are labeled “SA”; Sunday trips are “SU”. Please note the first eleven trips are labeled SA / SU since the trips are identical both days. All field trips are limited to 15 participants and will leave the Holiday Inn at 6:00 a.m. unless otherwise noted. Be sure to join your breakfast table marked with your field trip number between 5 and 6 a.m. so the leader can give you pertinent information and make plans for car-pooling.

Sack lunches are available as part of your registration, so be sure to pick those up as you leave with your group. Also bring your gear: comfortable walking shoes, water, raingear, camera, binoculars and any personal needs for your trip. All Saturday trips will return to the hotel by noon, whereas some Sunday trips end a bit later in the day or away from Missoula. Check individual trip descriptions for more info.

Please check out the pre- and post-trips that will be offered along with the festival this year. Bitterroot Audubon has scheduled one for Thursday; contact Becky Peters 406-369-5210 or b-bpeters@webband.com. Five Valleys Audubon has planned two for the following Monday; contact Larry Weeks: 406-549-5632 or bwsgenea@gmail.com for information, fees and to sign up. These trips are NOT part of the festival registration.



Restrooms Available



Mostly Driving



Family Friendly

FRI Bat Viewing

Friday 8:30 – 11:00 p.m. This tour will depend upon the weather conditions as bats are generally not active during high wind or rain. We will check out a pond or river backwater in the Missoula area where bats are likely to be active. The tour leader will have an iPad equipped with a high quality microphone to capture bat vocalizations. We will also use powerful flashlights to try and see the bats as they feed. People may want to bring their own vehicles and leave earlier because bats may not emerge until 10:30 or 11:00 pm. Limited to 20 participants. **Walking one-quarter mile or less on improved or rustic trails.**

SA1 / SU1 Maclay Flat



An easy 2-mile walking tour along the Bitterroot River through shrubs, grassland and plantation ponderosa pine. Birds will include chickadees, nuthatches, woodpeckers, flycatchers, Clark's nutcracker, red crossbills, western bluebird, and red-tailed hawk. You will return by 11:00 a.m. **Easy 2-mile hike on level trail.**

SA2 / SU2 Kim Williams Trail



A 3-4 mile walking tour along the Clark Fork River that starts and ends at the Holiday Inn. Possible birds include warbling vireo, gray catbird, American redstart, Cordilleran flycatcher, Nashville warbler, black-headed grosbeak, Bullock's oriole, and lazuli bunting. Return time will be between 9 and 10:00 a.m. **Level surface along an old railroad grade.**

SA3 / SU3 Lee Metcalf NWR



A flat walk along a gravel trail between 2 large shallow ponds with beautiful views of the Bitterroot Mountains. Most of the ducks, geese, swans, and grebes should be present. Other common birds will include marsh wren, northern harrier, osprey, sandhill crane, and bald eagle. If water levels permit, we'll take an easy one-mile hike through rich cottonwood bottomland habitat, home to a variety of passerines and woodpeckers like yellow warbler, black-headed grosbeak, willow flycatcher, red-naped sapsucker, and Lewis's woodpecker. **Level hiking.**

SA4 / SU4 Smurfit-Stone



This is the site of a large pulp and paper mill that closed in 2011. The plant site includes 3,000 acres and the habitats vary from groundwater filled potholes, grasslands, brushy riparian zones, and cottonwood bottomlands. Birds include:

Lewis's woodpecker, Say's phoebe, western bluebird, wood duck, trumpeter swan, Calliope hummingbird, white-throated swift, and peregrine falcon. **Half a mile walking with no elevation gain.**

SA5 / SU5 Burnt Fork



This trip will be along Burnt Fork Creek 4 miles east of Stevensville. The area is a ponderosa pine, Douglas-fir forest with cottonwood intermixed. Birds that could be seen include flycatchers (Hammond's, olive-sided, willow, and dusky), Swainson's thrush, ruffed grouse, red-naped sapsucker, house wren, ruby-crowned kinglet, warblers (MacGillivray's, yellow, yellow-rumped, orange-crowned, and common yellowthroat), and vireos (Cassin's and warbling). **Limited walking.**

SA6 / SU6 Rattlesnake Recreation Area



This field trip will hike from the Rattlesnake Trailhead along streamside and older, low-elevation coniferous forests. We'll see or hear a wide variety of western Montana songbirds and the emphasis for part of the hike will be on songs and calls. **Easy-to-moderate hiking up to 4 miles, minimal elevation gain.**

SA7 / SU7 Point-of-Rocks Historic Trail

A 3-mile hike of moderate exertion which includes 1 mile of the John Mullan Road through a rocky section of Montana west of Alberton, and 1 mile of the old Milwaukee RR. Several interpretive signs explain the history of both roads. Birds of interest include canyon and rock wrens, Cordilleran flycatcher, spotted towhee, and Lewis's woodpecker. **Hike on a rough trail with a moderate degree of difficulty, 200-foot elevation gain/descent.**

SA8 / SU8 Point Six



This will be a driving tour exploring the Butler Creek drainage including the Point Six road above a locked Forest Service gate accessing Lolo National Forest to an elevation of at least 6500 feet, higher if time permits. The tour will include a 45-minute walk along level roads along Butler Creek on the Old Dodd Ranch Road. We will stop frequently to survey different habitats, including managed meadows, the riparian Butler Creek, a pocket of sage habitat, and alpine forest. A wide variety of species is expected, such as olive-side and dusky flycatchers, gray and Steller's jays, hermit thrush, and pine grosbeak. Returning at 2:00 p.m. Sunday. **Mostly driving; one 45-minute walk on level roads.**

Saturday afternoon presentations

Leading off the Saturday afternoon session will be Kate Davis.

Kate founded the non-profit educational organization, Raptors of the Rockies, now in its 29th year, and keeps 16 injured, non-releasable and falconry birds at her home-based facility along the Bitterroot River. The Teaching Team ranges from Golden Eagles to a Northern Pygmy-Owl, and total 12 species, including an Aplomado Falcon gifted from The Peregrine Fund.



She will present a PowerPoint and discuss her educational programs and projects, with plenty of spectacular raptor photographs on the big screen. She'll also introduce some Teaching Team raptors—a falcon, eagle, hawk and owl, all "seasoned professionals." She'll finish with a shortened version of her recent TEDx Talk "Communication In the Dark" and practice "hooting up an owl." Kate will have a stash of books for signing—and bookmarks for all our friends!

Jeff Marks

Montana birds: What have we learned during the past 100 years? A *Distributional List of the Birds of Montana*, published by A. A. Saunders in 1921, was the only comprehensive publication on Montana's birds before Marks, Hendricks, and Casey authored *Birds of Montana* in 2016. The official state list has grown by nearly 50% since 1921, from 290 to 432 species. Jeff will discuss changes in the status and distribution of Montana's birds since Saunders's day, and highlight the need for additional information on a suite of species whose presence in the state remains poorly known.

Jeff became fascinated with birds in 1976 when he took an ornithology class from the legendary Philip Wright at the University of Montana. With co-authors Paul Hendricks and Dan Casey, he recently published *Birds of Montana* under the sponsorship of Montana Audubon. He studied breeding ecology of Long-eared Owls and nonbreeding ecology of Bristle-thighed Curlews for M.S. and Ph.D. degrees, respectively, at the University of Montana, and was elected a Fellow of the American Ornithologists' Union in 2005. He and Paul Hendricks are in the process of forming the Montana Bird Conservancy, a non-profit organization dedicated to improving knowledge of the biology, status, and conservation of Montana's birds.

American Prairie Reserve

American Prairie Reserve (APR) is reminiscent of the Roosevelt and Rockefeller era of large-scale conservation. The goal of APR is to permanently protect a truly wild, iconic swath of the Great Plains for native wildlife to thrive and the public to enjoy. They are creating a world-class wildlife reserve of 3.5 million acres in northeastern Montana in one of the four remaining places on Earth where an intact, native grassland ecosystem can be fully restored. This presentation will provide an update on APR's progress to date, while emphasizing the exceptional birding opportunities available to visitors.

Incorporating two of Montana's 42 Important Bird Areas, the Reserve is home to 19 Greater Sage-Grouse leks (and an estimated 500 birds) as well as the Swainson's Hawk, Burrowing Owl and a great many other rare and declining species representative of this vast, still-wild prairie ecosystem. It is APR's goal that this ambitious, inspirational habitat conservation project will bring hope to many birds on the brink.

Closing out Saturday afternoon will be Erick Greene.

Erick will be bringing us a "Bird's-Eye view of the Clark Fork River watershed." (See page 2).

SA9 / SU9 Brown's Lake



Brown's Lake is located in Ovando Valley. The route will include prairie potholes, aspen stands, riparian zones, Brown's Lake, and grasslands. Expect to see up to 5 species of grebes, most duck species, sandhill crane, bald and golden eagle, black tern, red-naped sapsucker, various songbirds, and possibly long-billed curlew.

Minimal walking.

SA10 / SU10 Deer Creek



This field trip will include a stop at the Old Milltown Dam Overlook and a drive up Deer Creek to the Pattee Canyon Recreation Area. Lush riparian vegetation transitions into fir and pine forests. Birds include: ruffed grouse, white-throated swift, woodpeckers, dusky and Hammond's flycatchers, Cassin' and warbling vireos, Pacific wren, western bluebird, Swainson's thrush, spotted towhee, western tanager, and several warblers. Other possibilities include: Cooper's hawk, Williamson's sapsucker, Cordilleran flycatcher, pygmy nuthatch, hermit thrush, and evening grosbeak. **Easy walk on a paved path to the overlook.**

SA11 / SU11 Lolo Pass



The final destination of this field trip will be Packer Meadow, which is on the Montana-Idaho divide near Lolo Pass. Snow conditions could prevent access to the higher elevations but there will be several birding stops along highway 12 in any event. Birds that can be expected are: Steller's jay, Clark's nutcracker, olive-sided flycatcher, varied thrush, Townsend's warbler, northern waterthrush, chestnut-backed chickadee, fox sparrow, and Lincoln's sparrow.

Several short, easy hikes; could be damp.

SA12 Clark Fork River – Grass Valley IBA



We will visit two private properties in the Clark Fork River-Grass Valley IBA. Efforts to encourage conservation and protect important bird habitat will be discussed. Expect to observe waterfowl, sora, Wilson's snipe, marsh wren, Lewis's woodpecker, western bluebird, gray catbird, common yellowthroat, and black-headed grosbeak.

Walk about 1 mile on gentle terrain.



Lazuli Bunting

SA13 Wildflower Walk



This trip will include a casual hike in the North Hills area of Missoula, with total focus on native wildflowers. The North Hills area is well known for the native phlox that thrives on the windswept hillsides. Two leaders will identify and discuss the flora. Departure time is 7:00 a.m. **Easy 1-2 mile hike with an elevation gain of 200 feet.**

SA14 Pattee Canyon – Sam Braxton Trail



A 3-mile loop on a National Recreation Trail through ponderosa pine, western larch and Douglas-fir forests, with an elevation gain of 300 feet. Possible specialty birds include: Clark's nutcracker, Steller's and gray jays, three-toed woodpecker, pileated woodpecker, Williamson's sapsucker, brown creeper, red crossbill, and pine grosbeak. **Moderate terrain, 300-foot elevation gain, 3 miles.**

SA15 Bass Creek



This area combines upland meadow (including irrigated hayfields), foothill forests, and riparian habitat. The primary purpose of the trip is to observe a large breeding colony of bobolinks, and renew our knowledge of bobolink ecology. Companion species in the fields are savannah sparrow, common yellowthroat, Wilson's snipe, red-winged and Brewer's blackbirds. Species observed in the riparian portion on past field trips include: least and willow flycatchers, warbling vireo, northern waterthrush, American redstart, Bullock's oriole, song sparrow, spotted sandpiper, belted kingfisher, and several species of ducks. We may also visit with one or more landowners to discuss conservation projects. **Walk back and forth on level dirt road, 1-2 miles cumulative; then walk a total of 2 miles round-trip along river bluffs with one steep 20-yard stretch going down and then back up.**

SA16 Upsata Lake / Monture Creek



This trip through the Ovando Valley will include a drive up Woodworth Road to Upsata Lake, looking for bobolinks, sandhill cranes, long-billed curlews, trumpeter swans, common loons, warblers, and a variety of ducks.



Bob Martinka

We'll walk around part of the lake, checking out the prairie potholes and the surrounding grasslands. If time permits we'll also drive over to Monture Creek Campground and look for riparian and forest species, such as American redstart, ruby- and golden-crowned kinglets, pileated woodpecker, and perhaps an American dipper. **Less than 1 mile of hiking on level to rolling paths.**

SA17 MPG Ranch



The MPG Ranch is a research and conservation property located in the northern Bitterroot Valley. Participants will learn about the restoration activities taking place on the property to improve habitat for birds and other wildlife. We will specifically focus on bird watching in shrubby habitats, including sagebrush, bitterbrush, and isolated brushy draws. Potential species include: Brewer's sparrow, sage thrasher, clay-colored sparrow, long-eared owl, and spotted towhee. If time allows, we will look for grasshopper sparrow, Say's phoebe, western kingbird, long-billed curlew, and lark sparrow. **Be prepared to hike for up to an hour. Most hiking will be on decommissioned roads, but some off-trail and uneven terrain should be expected.**

SA18 Blue Mountain Burn



A leisurely walk through a forest that burned in 2003, and although it has lost many of the unique bird species that use recently-burned forest, we will see some evidence of the special birds and conditions that only severe fire can bring to our forest communities. Birds that should be present include: American three-toed woodpecker; Lewis's woodpecker; Williamson's sapsucker; Clark's nutcracker; western tanager; flycatchers, chickadees, nuthatches, bluebirds, and warblers. **1 – 2 miles of easy hiking.**

SA19 Native Plant Garden / Wildflower ID



Get prepared for a full summer of botanizing and gardening! This class will focus on identifying wildflowers by looking at common characteristics. You will also learn how to choose and nurture native plants in a garden of your own design. Find out how to incorporate native shrubs, wildflowers, and grasses to create a water-wise garden. These spaces are not only beautiful year-round, but provide important habitat for wildlife and pollinators. Kids are welcome to come play in the garden. **Easy ¼ mile walking.**

SUI2 Warm Springs Ponds



These ponds were originally constructed by The Anaconda Company to treat sediments from its mining activities upstream. After becoming a wildlife management area and improvements over the past 50 years, the number of ponds has expanded to 21 with more than 6500 acres of land. These ponds have evolved into an impressive WMA in which local birders have identified 213 species of birds. Birds we can expect to see include blue-winged teal, ruddy duck, Barrow's goldeneye, red-necked grebe, black-crowned night heron, Virginia rail, sandhill crane, long-billed curlew, and other shorebirds. Field trip will not return to Missoula. **Minimal walking.**

SUI3 Mission Valley



This field trip will start at the Bison Range, wander north through the Mission Valley with stops at Ninepipes, Crow and Pablo Reservoirs, other wetlands and grasslands, and finish at Polson. The west shore or east shore of Flathead Lake can be added and the trip would end up in Somers or Bigfork. Birds that can be expected include trumpeter swan, wood duck, common loon, Franklin's gull, Caspian tern, least flycatcher, clay-colored sparrow, and assorted arriving neotrops. Field trip will not return to Missoula. **Some short walks; nothing strenuous.**

SUI4 Pattee Canyon – Crazy Canyon Trail



A 5-6 mile walking tour along a dirt road and trails through Douglas-fir and ponderosa pine forests with an elevation gain of 1200 feet. Birds will include: chickadees, nuthatches, woodpeckers, warblers, vireos, and thrushes. Possible specialty birds include: Clark's nutcracker, Steller's and gray jays, three-toed woodpecker, pileated woodpecker, Williamson's sapsucker, brown creeper, red crossbill, and pine grosbeak. Return time is 3:00 p.m. **Moderate-to-strenuous hiking for 5-6 miles with an elevation gain of 1200 ft.**

SUI5 Georgetown Lake



This trip will visit Georgetown Lake and take a loop road by Echo Lake, which will include willow thickets and high-elevation forests. Expected birds include common loon, grebes, warblers, jays, hermit thrush, and possibly a three-toed woodpecker. Field trip will not return to Missoula. **Minimal walking.**

SUI6 Primm Meadow



This field trip will travel through a diversity of habitats and elevations in the Gold Creek area, part of The Nature Conservancy's Clearwater-Blackfoot Project. The first stop will be Primm Meadow, an old growth stand of 300 to 500-year-old ponderosa pine. Other habitats will include willow-shrub-riparian, burned forests, meadows, and wetlands. Birds of interest include: Lewis's and pileated woodpeckers, spruce, dusky and ruffed grouse, golden eagle, and a wide variety of songbirds. Fire ecology and forest restoration issues will also be highlighted. Return time between 2:00 and 3:00 p.m. **Higher clearance vehicles (at least Subaru wagon or larger SUV) needed for rough roads. Easy to moderate walking.**

SUI7 Kelly Island



Explore the riparian forest and sloughs near the confluence of the Clark Fork and Bitterroot Rivers. We will meander through a portion of Kelly Island, and if time allows, parts of Maclay Flat. Expected birds include: Lewis's and pileated woodpeckers, nuthatches, brown creeper, warblers, hummingbirds, and Vaux swifts. Return time is 1:00 p.m. **Walking along rocky, uneven terrain.**

SUI8 Big Hole Valley



Birding for this all-day field trip starts at the top of Lost Trail Pass, where we have the chance to see pine grosbeaks, red crossbills, and other montane species. We'll then descend to the Big Hole Valley for a stop in sagebrush habitat to hear/see sage thrashers, Brewer's sparrows and vesper sparrows. In the meadows along the way we might pick up sandhill cranes and long-billed curlews. At the Big Hole Battlefield we will walk on easy trails through willow and lodgepole pine habitat, finding fox sparrows, northern waterthrushes, various flycatchers, and warblers, and maybe spot moose and elk. On the way back we'll drive a short way up Trail Creek to find more cranes, white-throated and Lincoln sparrows, and possibly a great gray owl. Return time is 5:00 p.m. **Easy walking. The Big Hole is known for its cold temperatures, even in June, so dress in layers.**

SUI9 Clearwater River Canoe Trip



An exceptional 2-hour canoe trip that flows through a dense willow marsh on an isolated portion of the Clearwater River ending at Seely Lake. The shuttle can be done by vehicle or by walking a 1.3-mile trail that includes good

birding and a blind overlooking a backwater area. Typical birds include common loon, ducks, woodpeckers, songbirds, bald eagle, osprey, great blue heron, and rarely American bittern. Participants must bring their own canoes or kayaks, know how to operate them, and provide your own life preserver, paddles and other floating gear. If the water/weather conditions are unsafe we will either do a lake-only float or land-birding in the same area. Trip departs at 8:00 a.m. and returns between 2:00 and 3:00 p.m. **Shuttle could include a 1.3-mile hike on a level trail.**

SU20 Butterfly Trip



US Forest Service Blue Mountain environs/Maclay Flat will be the field trip destination, concentrating on butterflies (target: Rocky Mountain Parnassian and Blue Copper), wildflowers, lichen, and birds will all be part of the mix. What's hot/what's not conditions will dictate our strategy/actions. Mostly driving, with short, easy walks at selected spots can be expected; the pace will be perfect for high-quality photo opportunities. Departure time is 9:00 a.m. and will return by 3:00 p.m. **Easy walking, up to 1 mile.**

Pre- and Post-Festival Trips

Contact Becky Peters for the Thursday trip; 406-369-5210 or b-bpeters@webband.com. For the Monday trips; contact Larry Weeks at 406-549-5632 or bwsgenea@gmail.com. They are NOT part of the festival registration.

Thursday

Pre-Festival Digiscope Field Trip to Lee Metcalf Refuge

Join Chip Clouse on a Digiscope Photography workshop/field trip to the Lee Metcalf Refuge in Stevensville, MT on Thursday, June 2 from 3–5 pm. We will be learning how to take photos by using our smart phones on a scope. It takes just the right touch, and Chip will show us how to do it. We will have perfect subjects to practice on, with the great variety of waterfowl at the Metcalf ponds.

Chip Clouse is a long-time biologist and environmental educator who is presently an Opticron ProStaffer and rep for Novagrade Digiscoping Adapters, Stedi-stock, Rick Young Outdoors, etc. He has a Master's degree in Conservation Biology from Colorado State Univ, and has led field trips at various birding festivals around the country. He previously

served as Education and Outreach Director for the American Birding Association. Chip has lived and worked in nine western states and the Caribbean, including a field season with the Univ. of MT Avian Science Center in 2004. He is partial to nuthatches, woodpeckers, Belgian beers and an occasional stout or IPA, and sometimes answers to "Beerbirder." After birding we will join Chip on a thirst-quenching brewery tour of some of the excellent breweries in the Bitterroot Valley and grab a bite to eat as well. This looks to be a great pre-Festival field trip!

Monday

Post Festival Field Trip to Bannack

Join Five Valleys Audubon Society for a full-day trip to the Bannack area. This trip is for 3 – 5 people and will leave the Holiday Inn Downtown at 6:00 am on Monday, June 6. Thomas Kallmeyer and Jeff Marks will be your leaders. The cost will be \$75 per person. We will begin by birding along Bannack-Bench Road, taking our time to search for gray flycatcher, Brewer's sparrow, brown thrasher, loggerhead shrike, and ferruginous hawk. After surveying

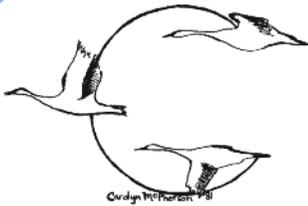
the bench, we'll proceed to Clark Canyon Reservoir to look for shorebirds, gulls and waterfowl. We'll wrap up the day with a visit to shortgrass habitat north of Dillon to look for McCown's longspur and long-billed curlew. Be sure to bring food and refreshment for the day, and consider weather when choosing clothing. Expect a late return to Missoula.

Monday

Post Festival Field Trip to Freezeout Lake

Join Five Valleys Audubon Society for a full day field trip to Freezeout Lake and vicinity. This field trip is for 3–5 people and will leave the Holiday Inn Downtown at 6:00 am on Monday, June 6. Expect a late return to Missoula. You will need to pack a lunch and snacks to last the entire day. Larry Weeks will be your leader and we will travel in a van. The cost will be \$75 per person. Target birds will include upland sandpiper, Clark's grebe, American bittern, black-crowned night-heron, McCown's and chestnut-collared longspurs, golden eagle, ferruginous hawk, long-billed curlew, marbled godwit, and willet.

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17th ANNUAL MONTANA AUDUBON BIRD FESTIVAL

June 3–5, 2016
Holiday Inn Downtown
Missoula, Montana

A special thank you to Kate Davis for the cover photo taken in the beautiful Bitterroot Valley, and to Bob Martinka for the bird photos displayed throughout this brochure.

CELEBRATING 40 YEARS OF CONSERVATION

2016 marks our 40th year of conserving native birds, other wildlife and their habitats across Montana!

At this year's Wings Across the Big Sky bird festival in Missoula, we'll revisit some of our past successes and other notable events in our long history in becoming one of the most trusted conservation voices in the state.

Stay tuned to our website, www.mtaudubon.org and Facebook page to learn more about what we're doing to celebrate this landmark year in our long history.

Bullock's Oriole

Bob Martinka

