

19th ANNUAL
MONTANA AUDUBON
BIRD FESTIVAL

June 8–10, 2018
Red Lion Hotel
Kalispell, Montana

wings 
MONTANA
AUDUBON
across the big sky



Bob Marnika

Chris Berry



*Kintla Lake in
Glacier National Park*

Above: Common Loon

welcome

We're delighted to bring Montana Audubon's 19th Annual Wings Across the Big Sky Festival to northwest Montana this year!

Our longstanding community event is co-hosted by the Flathead Audubon Society and scheduled for Kalispell, June 8–10, 2018. Registration will open at 1:00 pm, so plan to sign in and enjoy a special presentation Friday afternoon, followed by a dinner buffet and our keynote presentation in the evening.

Amazing birding field trips are scheduled around the Glacier-Flathead region over the weekend in addition to timely bird conservation presentations. A variety of informational tables and festivities will be on hand as we celebrate efforts to conserve our birds and wildlife in Montana. Take a minute to review this brochure for information on our Festival headquarters, speakers, and fantastic birding field trips to help you decide how to spend your bird festival weekend in and around Kalispell.

Overview

FRIDAY

- 1:00 p.m. Registration Begins
Vendor & Sponsor areas open
- 4:00 p.m. Professor Avian Guano – Denny Olson
- 5:00 p.m. Mexican Dinner Buffet
- 6:15 p.m. Festival Kickoff
- 7:00 p.m. Keynote Speaker – Dr. Stuart Strahl

SATURDAY MORNING

- 5–8 a.m. Breakfast with field trip leaders; Leave on field trips

SATURDAY AFTERNOON

- 1:30 Afternoon Speaker Sessions

SATURDAY EVENING

- 5:30 p.m. Banquet, Dessert Auction, Awards

SUNDAY MORNING

- 5-8 a.m. Breakfast with field trip leaders; Leave on field trips

Festival headquarters and lodging

Red Lion Hotel Kalispell is a mountain lodge located in Montana's favorite ski town! Conveniently attached to the Kalispell Center Mall in the heart of the Flathead Valley, Red Lion Hotel Kalispell serves as the central location for northwest Montana discovery.

The hotel is easily accessible to nearby restaurants and shopping as well as Glacier National Park. Guests will enjoy breathtaking views of Big Sky Country like never before: wake to spectacular vistas of the Montana landscape, a hot breakfast, and premium amenities including 24-hour dining at Café2Go, 15,807 square feet of meeting and event space in Kalispell, a state-of-the-art fitness center, and our newly renovated solarium with indoor swimming pool and sauna. The address is: 20 North Main Street, just north of historic downtown Kalispell.

Rooms are available for \$99 per night. Please call 406.751.5050 and mention Montana Audubon to receive this special discounted rate. We recommend that you book early, particularly if you expect to arrive early or stay beyond the duration of the festival. The Red Lion will honor the pricing as long as rooms are available.

keynote speaker



**Stuart D. Strahl,
Ph.D.**

With 35 years of background in national and international programs, Dr. Stuart Strahl is a career conservationist with deep experience in applied science, restoration ecology, public policy and not-for-profit management. He serves as president and CEO of the Chicago Zoological Society (CZS), which operates the world-famous Brookfield Zoo – the most popular paid cultural attraction in the Midwest, serving 2.3 million guests annually. Dr. Strahl oversees a staff of 430 full-time, 1,200 part-time and seasonal employees, and a corps of 800 volunteers, all of whom who engage in numerous local, regional and international conservation, education and animal welfare initiatives.

Stuart has a long history with Audubon. His first charitable gift was made to National Audubon Society in 1970, his first paid job in conservation was as a “kitchen boy” at the Audubon Camp of Maine in 1975, and he has been a Life Member of Audubon since high-school. In addition, he has served as an Audubon Chapter leader in three States and while in Venezuela. His family donated their farm on the Eastern Shore of Maryland to the Chesapeake Audubon Society to form Pickering Creek Audubon Center, where he continues to serve as a Board member. Prior to arriving at CZS, Stuart served as Vice President/Florida State Director of the National Audubon Society and foundation President/CEO of Audubon Florida. From 1996–2003 he led the organization into prominence as the acknowledged private-sector leader in the largest ecological restoration initiative in history, the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan.

Fluent in Spanish, Stuart began his career as a field biologist and later as founding Director of Latin American Programs for the Wildlife Conservation Society during the 1980s and early 1990s. He is dedicated to transforming conservation into mainstream public and economic issues, bringing together diverse constituencies around solutions to complex issues and creating careers for young professionals in conservation. He has worked extensively to develop lasting partnerships in the U.S. and Latin America, resulting in preservation of millions of acres of wildlife habitat and billions of dollars in conservation funding.

Friday afternoon presentation

Professor Avian Guano's "Oddball Bird Stories from NW Montana"

Why do Dippers dip, Gray Jays travel in threes, Swifts never land, and Peregrines see nearsighted? Unusual stories of birds is his specialty, and Prof. Guano is a bit eccentric himself (it takes one to know one). Enjoy some "bet-you-didn't-know" stories from the sidelong view!

Denny Olson's formal training as a biologist and geologist, as well as teaching nature for over 20 years in the north woods and mountain west, has given him expertise in many disciplines. He has done research on beavers, hares and loons, and received an M.S. Degree (magna cum laude) from the University of Minnesota. From those scientific beginnings he forged an unlikely union between science, humor,

and drama, and established a national reputation as an innovative performer and educator.



Saturday afternoon presentations

Black Swift Monitoring in Northwest Montana

Lisa Bate, Glacier National Park

Non-game Biologist

Chris Hammond, Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks Regional Nongame/Mitigation Biologist

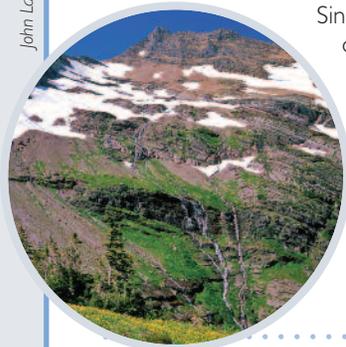
Since 2004, when only three nesting colonies were known in Montana, Black Swifts (*Cypseloides niger*) have been a state

priority species for inventory and monitoring. They are an unusual, late-nesting, Neotropical migrant, with young fledging in August or September. Black Swifts rely on perennial streams, waterfalls, and insect prey for survival, and are at risk of extirpation due to climate change. In 2015, Canada listed Black Swifts as endangered due to significant population declines. Since 2012, partnerships have coalesced around the search for this hard-to-detect bird, striving for standardized surveys that can reveal the bird's presence and distribution in Montana. With a refined protocol, training, and survey methodology, 2017 was our most successful survey season yet.

Lisa oversees wildlife and compliance monitoring along the Going-to-the-Sun Road in Glacier while managing several research, inventory, and monitoring projects in the park. She has a special emphasis on bats, Harlequin Ducks, eagles, and Black Swifts.

Chris is responsible for research, management, and conservation of primarily non-game wildlife species with recent efforts focusing on Black Swifts, Common Loons, Great Gray Owls, and Harlequin Ducks and projects involving conservation easements, acquisitions, habitat restoration, and wildlife viewing areas.

John Lambing



Four Conservation Issues Where Montana Audubon is Making a Difference

Join Montana Audubon's *Senior Director of Public Policy, Janet Ellis*, to learn about four issues that Montana's Audubon's policy program is working on today. We won't reveal the four topics now—but we can tell you that they will be hot topics, relevant to birds, Audubon, and Montana.

Four stories, each told in 10 minutes. Questions will be welcome!

Janet has coordinated Montana Audubon's legislative and grassroots efforts on behalf of Montana's wildlife and wildlife habitat since 1989. She works on a variety of issues and has received several awards for her work, including "Conservationist of the Year" from the Montana Environmental Information Center, Montana Wildlife Federation, and

Montana Audubon; a 2016 "Lifetime Award for Conservation and Clean Energy Achievement" from the National Wildlife Federation; and a "Special Achievement Award" from the Montana Native Plant Society.



Looking Ahead Larry Berrin, Executive Director

The mission of Montana Audubon is to promote appreciation, knowledge and conservation of Montana's native birds, other wildlife, and natural ecosystems to safeguard biological diversity for current and future generations. For over 40 years, science has underpinned, informed, and guided our policy and education work to help us better serve our members. In the policy realm, we've defended important environmental laws in the state legislature

and helped introduce bills that now protect the birds and other wildlife we all cherish. Our science program helped establish Montana's Important Bird Area (IBA) network, with 42 IBAs encompassing over 10 million acres of critical wetland, sagebrush and grassland habitats across the state. We have also conducted important research and monitoring on bird species of conservation concern like curlews and black swifts. At the Montana Audubon Center in Billings, we are delivering innovative nature-based programs that are connecting youth to this amazing landscape we all cherish. Join

our new Executive Director as he shares with you what the future will look like for our organization with the launch of our new three-year strategic plan. Learn about Montana Audubon's innovative projects focused on expanding our reach state-wide by working with new and existing partners to help achieve our mission.



field trips

All field trips this year have been designated “Family Friendly”



by the Flathead Chapter. Come with your water bottles and comfortable shoes and participate in a diverse selection of birding and conservation-themed trips.

Please review each description (pages 4–6) and make your choices. Saturday trips are labeled “SA”; Sunday trips are “SU”. Please note the first eight trips are labeled SA / SU since the trips are identical both days.

All field trips are limited to 15 participants (unless otherwise indicated) and will leave the Red Lion Hotel at various times. Be sure to check your departure time and join your breakfast table marked with your field trip number the hour before your trip is scheduled to depart so you can meet your group and leader, and receive 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 Kalispell. Check individual trip descriptions for more info.



Restrooms Available



Mostly Driving

SA-1 / SU-1 West Flathead Valley Ponds

Departure time 7:00 a.m., noon return. Explore the West Flathead Valley focusing on a series of wetlands recently protected through conservation efforts. Representatives from Flathead Valley Land Trust will join us and explain the importance of these unique ponds, which are the largest Sandhill Crane staging area in the valley. We should see many of the valley's waterfowl, shorebirds, and raptors. Be prepared for any kind of weather, including footwear for walking on muddy roads. **Possible walking less than 1/4 mile on rolling hills.**

SA-2 / SU-2 Breeding Birds of Smith Lake



Departure time 6:00 a.m., noon return. The Smith Lake area is a very popular location to bird in the Flathead Valley. We'll drive Smith Lake Road and look for sparrows, orioles, warblers, and other breeding migrants and then make our way to Smith Lake in search of waterfowl and wetland species. We will explore a diversity of habitats. Potential birds include Red-necked Grebe, Sora, Sandhill Crane, American Bittern, Wood Duck, and Wilson's Snipe. This is primarily a driving trip with several stops to get out and bird. **Easy; no walking needed.**

SA-3 / SU-3 Tally Lake



Departure time 7:00 a.m., noon return (Sat), 1:00 p.m. (Sun). This excellent field trip winds through a wide variety of habitats; much time will be spent exploring Forest Service lands on the way to Tally Lake. It is possible to see every warbler species found in northwest Montana on this outing. Neotropical migrants such as American Redstart, Wilson's Warbler and Northern Waterthrush, as well as the Fox Sparrow, can be found here in streamside thickets; Townsend's Warblers and Western Tanager are often observed in the thick conifer

stands, and Common Loons and Bald Eagles breed along the shores of Tally Lake. This trip will focus on bird identification in the field by both sight and by ear. **Mostly driving with some optional short walking (<1/4 mile) around the campground on flat ground. Fee: \$5 per vehicle.**

SA-4 / SU-4 Owen Sowerwine Natural Area

Departure time 7:00 a.m., noon return (Sat), 1:00 p.m. (Sun). Four hundred and forty acres of outstanding riparian habitat on the Flathead River can be found on this Montana Department of Natural Resources (DNRC) Natural Area managed by Flathead Audubon Society. Over 80 species of birds have been observed here, including Red-eyed and Warbling Vireos, Bullock's Oriole, Vaux's Swift, Black-headed Grosbeak, and Calliope Hummingbird. Near the Flathead River we may see Wood Duck, Common Goldeneye, Spotted Sandpiper, Bank Swallow, and Great Blue Heron. This will be a pleasant morning wander through a rich riparian setting in a very special protected area on the Flathead River. **Easy walk on a gravel and dirt trail with little elevation gain. Total distance will not be more than two miles.**

SA-5 / SU-5 Lone Pine State Park and Foy's Lake



Departure time 7:00 a.m., noon return. We will spend a morning looking for Red-necked, Eared and Horned Grebes and other waterfowl, including Common and Barrow's Goldeneye, in the Foy's Lake area. Driving up to Lone Pine State Park we will look for Townsend's Solitaires, several species of woodpeckers, and warblers. A short walk to an amazing vista overlooking the valley will reveal the blue waters of Flathead Lake to the south and the Swan Mountains to the east. There will be mix of driving and walking. **Walking will be on designated dirt trails, short (< 1/2 mile) with some uphill. Entrance Fee: \$6/vehicle for out-of-state vehicles.**

SA-6 / SU-6 Flathead River to Lake Birding



Departure time 7:00 a.m., noon return. Thousands of acres of Flathead Valley wetlands, farmlands, and river bottom habitat have been conserved through the Flathead River to Lake Partnership. As we tour some of the best birding habitat in the lower Flathead Valley, we should spot spring songbirds, nesting waterfowl, bald eagles, and many other raptors. We will give you insights into how this conservation initiative began, what has been accomplished, and what is on the horizon. The route will take us to conserved and restored lands with wet meadows, agricultural areas, riparian forests, pothole lakes, and back water sloughs. The trip will also include a visit to a new, Flathead Audubon-constructed waterfowl blind on Wylie Slough. **Several short walks (<1/4 mile) on flat, but possible bumpy paths and wet fields. Rubber boots or rubber soled shoes recommended.**

SA-7 / SU-7 Glacier National Park West to East



Departure time 6:00 a.m., noon return (Sat), 2:00 p.m. (Sun). {Two trips on both days from opposite starting points.} Glacier National Park is one of the jewels of the National Park system, and the birding here can be rewarding. On the west side of GNP, we will explore everything from lush riparian areas to dense ancient forest, from meadows to rushing streams. Walking along the McDonald Creek oxbow we will search for riparian birds, flycatchers, warblers, and river waterfowl. We will take several walks, up to a mile in length. Upper McDonald Creek and the Avalanche Creek area promise good chances at Harlequins, Dippers, Pacific Wrens, and Varied and other thrushes. A mix of driving and walking. **Walking will be on designated paved or dirt trails and be relatively short (<1/2 mile) on flat to moderate terrain. Fee: \$30, unless participants have a park pass which will cover up to five people.**

SA-8 / SU-8 Glacier National Park East to West



Departure time 6:00 am, noon return (Sat), 2:00 p.m. (Sun). {Two trips on both days from opposite starting points.} Glacier National Park is one of the jewels of the National Park system, and the birding here can be rewarding. On the west side of GNP, we will explore everything from lush riparian areas to dense ancient forest, from meadows to rushing streams. Walking along the McDonald Creek oxbow we will search for riparian birds, flycatchers, warblers, and river waterfowl. We will take several walks, up to a mile in length. Upper McDonald Creek and the Avalanche Creek area promise good chances at Harlequins, Dippers, Pacific Wrens, and Varied and other thrushes. A mix of driving and walking. **Walking will be on designated paved or dirt trails and be relatively short (<1/2 mile) on flat to moderate terrain. Fee: \$30, unless participants have a pass which will cover up to five people.**

SA-9 Lubec Lake Area of GNP



Departure time 6:00 a.m., noon return. We will traverse the southern boundary of Glacier National Park with a handful of stops before reaching the trailhead. Then we move on to explorations of the Lubec Lake and Coonsa Creek area with a short hike. Potential species include Willow and Alder Flycatcher, Wilson's Snipe, Northern Waterthrush, and Lincoln's Sparrow. **Hiking will be relatively short (one mile) on rolling dirt trail with a slight elevation gain.**

SA-10 Swan River Refuge



Departure time 7:00 a.m., noon return. We'll begin at the viewing site for the Swan River Wildlife Refuge. Birds encountered may include American Bitterns, Black Terns, and Sandhill Cranes which usually make this their summer residence along with other migratory birds and year-round species. We will then do a loop walk (3/4 mile) around the refuge. Next we'll drive south to The Nature Conservancy's Swan River Oxbow Preserve and take another short hike (1/2 mile). Potential species to see include Lincoln's Sparrow, Townsend's Warbler, and Golden-crowned Kinglet. Lastly, we'll drive down the road to the Swan River where we might see American Dipper, Northern Waterthrush, and Red-eyed Vireo. **Rubber boots are recommended as much of the hikes will be in wet areas. Two hikes are short (<3/4 mile each), on flat, often wet and muddy terrain.**

SA-11 Live Raptors at Wild Wings



Departure time 9:30 a.m., noon return. Participants will have the opportunity to view up close nine species of owls, five species of hawks, three species of falcons, and an osprey

that are all native to Montana, in addition to a hawk native to the southwest. Each bird will be presented individually with a brief description. Time permitting, participants will be able to walk through the mews. Participants can stand or are welcome to bring a folding chair. The parking lot is gravel and the presentation area is grass that is fairly level. The walkways in the mews are pea gravel. Much of this field trip is a presentation and we recommend bringing a chair. **Walking is on level, graveled ground.**

SA-12 Lost Trail NWR



Departure time 6:00 a.m., noon return. Located in Pleasant Valley approximately 49 miles west of Kalispell, Lost Trail National Wildlife Refuge was designated in 1999 as a sanctuary for migratory birds. The Palouse Prairie, scattered wetlands, cold water creeks and springs, forested uplands, and a 1,700+ acre glacial lake provide migratory and breeding habitat for a wide range of birds and other wildlife. You will have an opportunity to spend time along Dahl Lake viewing the large numbers of waterfowl species including Grebes, Barrow's and Common Goldeneye, Bufflehead, Ruddy Duck, and Cinnamon Teal. The lake mud flats provide feeding habitat for several shorebirds including American Avocet, Wilson's Phalarope, and Black-necked Stilt. Dahl Lake also has a nesting pair of Trumpeter Swans and previous year cygnets are also normally present. The sounds of smaller birds will surround you including Yellow-headed Blackbirds, Marsh Wrens, American Coots, and Soras. On a perfect day, you can sometimes hear a wolf howl from across the lake. Surrounding prairie lands host several breeding Sandhill Cranes and Northern Harriers. **Short 1/8 mile walk on a two-track trail to the lake edge. Birders can explore the lake edge or out into the Palouse Prairie on their own. Lake area can be wet and muddy.**

SA-13 Camas Road in GNP



Departure time 6:00 a.m., noon return. Join us for a remarkable morning of birding along the Camas Road in Glacier National Park. Diverse habitats will allow the opportunity to see an incredible number of different species from warblers and flycatchers to hawks and eagles with the possibility of catching a glimpse of an elusive Northern Hawk Owl. **This will be primarily a driving trip with scheduled stops.**

SA-14 Little Beaver Lake



Departure time 7:00 a.m., noon return. Some of the best birding on the Whitefish Trail System is around Dollar and Little Beaver Lakes. In the past few years, a highlight of this trip has been viewing a Common Loon nest. If the nest is successful this year, adults and young should be present. Common bird species are

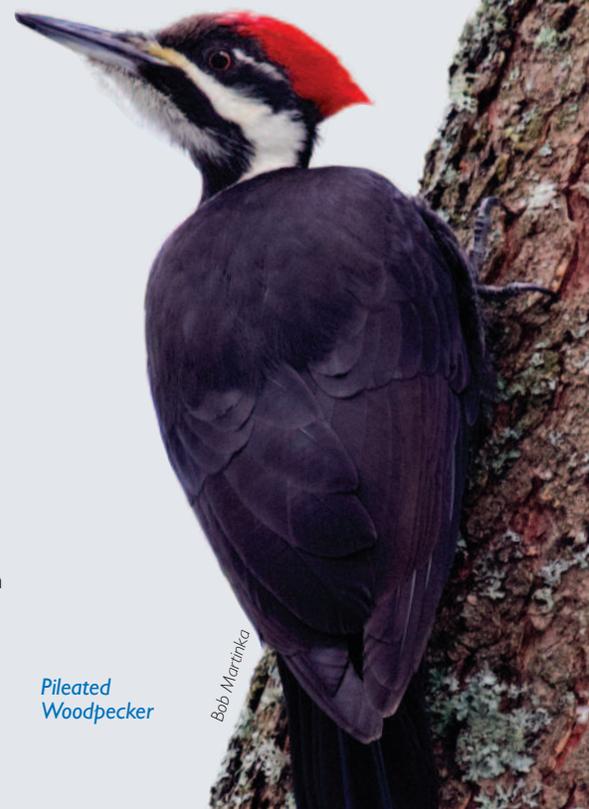
Hooded Merganser, MacGillivray's Warbler, Common Yellowthroat, American Redstart, Pacific Wren, and Dusky Flycatcher. Most of Montana's warbler species are possible present here. A small colony of Tennessee Warblers nested in the area during 2016. **Total distance of the trip is 3.5 to 4 miles, with a couple climbs of about 150 feet.**

SA-15 Lawrence Park (Family)

Departure time 8:00 a.m., noon return. Join us for a few hours of easy birding while exploring one of Kalispell's avian hotspots. Lawrence Park is a surprisingly bird-rich area located at the north end of Main Street in Kalispell. Wood Duck, Lazuli Bunting, Bullock's Oriole and Black-headed Grosbeak are all possible. We will focus on the basics of bird watching. **This is a trip for families; walking will be level and easy.**

SA-16 Swan River Nature Trail – Birds and Native Plants

Departure time 7:30 a.m., noon return. This is an easy, half-mile to one-mile walk along the beautiful reservoir on the Swan River. Our trip begins at the east end of this family-friendly nature trail. It is home to nesting Goldeneyes, Osprey, Western Tanager, three species of Chickadee, and many other passerines fill the forested shoreline with lively song. A member of the Montana Native Plant Society will be along to answer questions about local plants. Parking is limited. **Walking will be on an old flat road bed; may choose to scramble through a little bit of forest to better see the waterfowl. Restrooms available nearby before getting on the trail.**



Pileated
Woodpecker

Bob Martinka

SA-17 Flathead Lake Biological Station & Boat Ride



Departure time 6:45 a.m., noon return. This trip affords an incredible opportunity to learn about one of the oldest active biological field research stations in the U.S. Students and researchers from around the world come to the Flathead Lake Biological Station (FLBS) to learn about ecology and limnology (freshwater ecology) from experts. For over 100 years their year-round novel research has helped people live in a healthier, more sustainable environment as well as helping policy makers make informed decisions. In addition to a tour of the facility, participants will be treated to a ride around Bird Island and Finely point in the FLBS research boat (weather permitting) to view Bald Eagle and Osprey nests. **Minimal walking. Dress for colder weather on the water.**

SU-9 Glacier's Southeast Corner



Departure time 6:00 a.m., no return to Kalispell. We will drive along the Middle Fork of the Flathead River, stopping at several locations to look for birds and other wildlife. Species often seen include Spruce Grouse, Pine Grosbeak, Timberline Sparrow, Boreal Chickadee, Olive-sided Flycatcher and other high-elevation birds of the spruce/fir forest. Next, we will stop at the Lubec Trailhead to bird the nearby riparian area. Species could include Fox, Lincoln's, Song and White-crowned Sparrow, Veery, Northern Waterthrush, Black-headed Grosbeak, and various ducks. We will stop at the trip leader's house for lunch, where we can view bird feeders and a beaver pond for more riparian birds. Easily seen here are Cassin's Finch, Pine Siskin, Red-Winged Blackbird, and Calliope and Rufous Hummingbirds. Our last stop will be Middle Two-Medicine Lake where we will bird the campground and take the South Shore Trail to Paradise Point. Species regularly observed here are White-crowned, Lincoln's, and Fox Sparrows, Wilson's, McGillivray's and Townsend's Warbler, Varied and Swainson's Thrush, and Three-toed Woodpecker. Boreal Chickadee can sometimes occur. If we have time and decide to extend the trip, we can bird the prairie potholes to the east during the afternoon. **Mostly driving with some short (<1/2 mile) on dirt roads. \$30/car fee if no Nat'l Park pass. No return to Kalispell.**

SU-10 Upper Swan River Valley



Departure time 7:30 a.m., 2:00 p.m. return. This trip will begin with driving, including brief stops at easily accessible viewing sights along the shore of Swan Lake and the viewing site for the Swan River Wildlife Refuge. Some potential species include American Bittern, Black Tern,

and Sandhill Crane which usually make this their summer residence along with other migrants and year-round birds. Traveling a short distance down the Swan Valley, we will stop at the Point Pleasant Campground overlooking the wild and scenic Swan River. The 2.1 mile Sprunger-Whitney Nature Trail begins here. For those who would like to stretch their legs before the ride home, this moderate, loop hike through old-growth forests and old clear cuts affords magnificent panoramas of the Mission Range as well as opportunities to discuss the biodiversity of the plants, birds, and wildlife of the area. The walk covers terrain used for hundreds of years by the Pend d'Oreille and Salish peoples to fish and hunt. There is the opportunity to see elk, bear, or otters that make their home in this magnificent wild valley. The hike is approximately one hour in duration. **Hiking/Walking: First part – flat short walks for viewing; also viewed well from car windows; Second part – 2/1 miles, hilly on uneven ground for about half the walk.**

SU-11 Common Loons and Loon Chicks



Departure time 8:00 a.m., noon return. Northwest Montana is home to more than 80 nesting pairs of Common Loons who begin their sensitive nesting season by early May and hatch chicks by early June. This trip will take you to several local lakes near Whitefish to see loon families, learn about common loon life history and 30 years of successful cooperative management. We should also see ring-necked ducks, red-necked grebes, possibly hear bitterns, and many other wetland species. **Trip will entail some trail walking up/down short hills to edges of lakes, but distances less than 100 yards. Rubber footwear is recommended.**

SU-12 National Bison Range – Bison, Birds & Blooms



Departure time 6:00 a.m., 5:00 p.m. return. Birding at the National Bison Range is, simply put, wonderful. With a great diversity of habitat, we will have the opportunity to see a wide range of bird life – Clay-colored and Grasshopper Sparrows in native prairie; Lazuli Buntings and Bullock's Orioles in shrubby thickets; Red Crossbills, Dusky Flycatchers and Dusky Grouse in the forest; and Golden Eagles and Lewis' Woodpeckers at High Point. Wildflowers are especially abundant this time of year; possibly bitterroot will be in bloom. Of course, there should be bison! The view from the top of the Bison Range encompasses the Mission Valley to the north, the magnificent Mission Mountains to the east, and a long view of the Flathead River Valley to the west.

For a bird list of the National Bison Range, visit www.fws.gov/uploadedFiles/NBR%20bird%20list.usgs.pdf. **\$5 per vehicle fee.**

SU-13 Ninepipe NWR and Pothole Lakes



Departure time 7:00 a.m., 5:00 p.m. return. The Mission Valley is an hour's drive from Kalispell, but it is a trip well worth the time. We will visit numerous prairie pothole lakes and Ninepipe National Wildlife Refuge to see hundreds of breeding ducks, grebes, gulls, and cormorants, all set against the backdrop of the spectacular and snowy Mission Mountains. Birding here is exceptional; we will witness great bird diversity, from Western Grebes to Prairie Falcons, from Short-eared Owls to Wilson's Snipe, and from Western Wood Pewees to Trumpeter Swans.

SU-14 West Flathead Lake and Brown's Meadow



Departure time 6:00 a.m., 3:00 p.m. return. This trip will make a few stops on the west side of Flathead Lake, including Dayton, to look for waterfowl, shorebirds, and osprey. We will then look for a variety of species in the Brown's Meadow area. We will pass through grasslands, riparian, and forest habitats looking for kingbirds, flycatchers, vireos, and warblers. We can expect about 55-60 species on the field trip. **This will be mostly driving with stops to get out and bird.**

SU-15 Eureka and Tobacco Valley

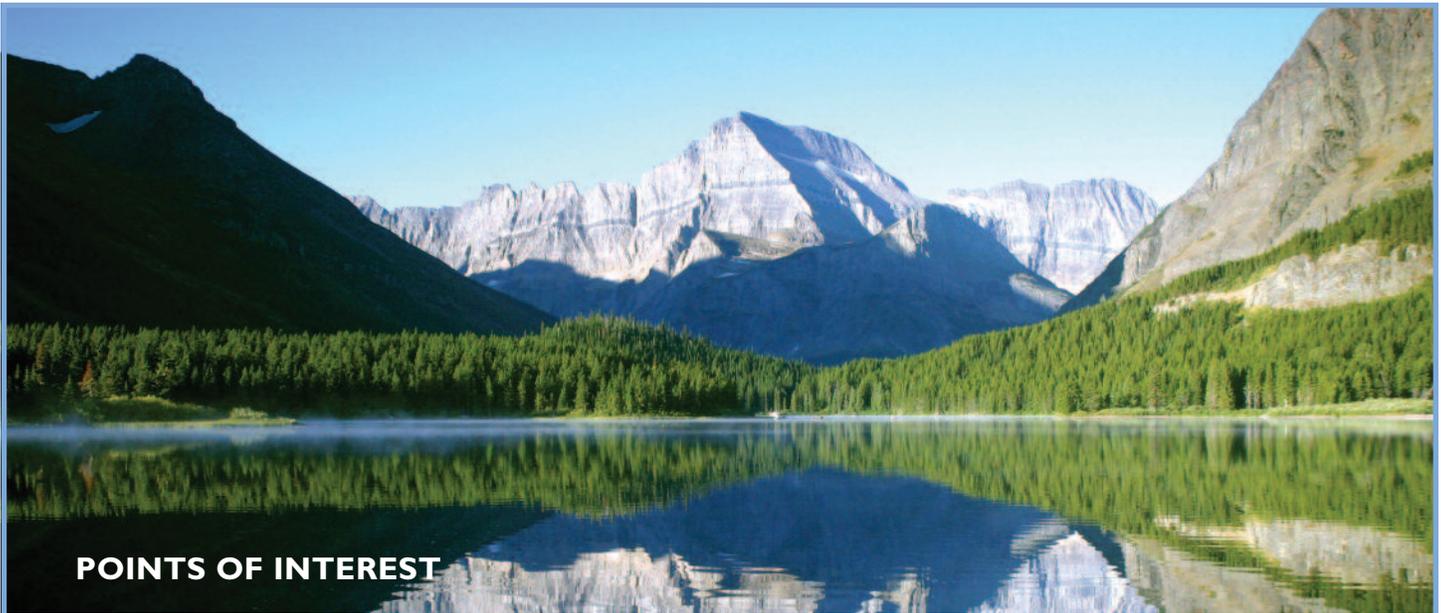


Departure time 6:00 a.m., 1:00 p.m. return. An easy hike on a trail along the Tobacco River will pass through a variety of habitats, including riparian areas with cottonwood trees, shrubs, and meadows. Nearby upland coniferous forests add diversity. Species that may be seen include a variety of warblers, flycatchers, Gray Catbirds, orioles, Black-headed Grosbeaks, and nesting Bald Eagles. We will also visit at least one lake with a chance of seeing Common Loons and a variety of grebe species. This will be primarily easy hiking on an abandoned railroad bed converted to a trail, with little elevation gain and a distance of about two miles. The hiking surface is a combination of gravel, railroad ballast rock, soil and grass. **Driving will mostly be between birding stops and restroom facilities.**

SU-16 Biking and Birding Somers Trail



Departure time 7:00 a.m., 2:00 p.m. return. Join us for a 15-mile round trip on the Rails-to-Trails system that runs from Kila to Somers. Ride the southern portion from the conference hotel (Red Lion Inn) to Somers and back. Explore riparian shrublands, wetlands, grasslands, and forest, searching for Clay-colored Sparrow, Spotted Towhee, Nashville Warbler, Willow Flycatcher, Calliope Hummingbird, and more. An optional pastry stop in Somers will help refuel the return trip to Kalispell. **Bring your own bike and helmet. Bike ride is 15-miles round trip, on paved bike trail over rolling hills.**



POINTS OF INTEREST

Glacier National Park (naturally!)
35 miles NE of Kalispell

Owen Sowerwine Natural Area
(IBA) One mile East of Kalispell

West Valley Ponds
2 miles West of Kalispell

Conrad Mansion
east side of Kalispell – original
mansion of Kalispell founder.

**“Crits & Croissants: A Saturday
Morning Artists’ Critique”**
Hockaday Art Museum,
downtown Kalispell

Lone Pine Visitor Center
interactive wildlife exhibits, breathtaking
views – 5 miles southwest of Kalispell

Moose’s Saloon
corner of Highways 2 and 93 –
a true Flathead experience!

Montana Trolley
Historical Kalispell tour is wonderful
(usually \$10/person) for a group
of 15 or more

Farmer’s Market
FVCC parking lot, Saturday morning

House of Mystery
Hwy 2 outside of Glacier Park –
fun for kids, too.

NATURE ADVENTURE TOURS

A new bird festival tradition!

Write in a bid for a unique experience
in a remarkable natural location!

This will be the second year we’ve offered
outings from a host of experienced
birders, naturalists and guides to festival
attendees. Weekend cabin getaways;
“insider” bird tours of lesser-known
hotspots; float trips; wildlife photographer
excursions and more!

All proceeds from the sale of
Nature Adventure Tours will support
Montana Audubon.



Northern Hawk Owl
(juvenile)

Auction Items Needed

Silent Auction items are needed for Montana
Audubon’s Bird Festival. This year we request
people to PLEASE only donate NEW items
for the auction. Artwork, pottery, bird feeders,
birdhouses, and homemade cookies are
encouraged. This auction will benefit our
public policy program.

Donations can be delivered to a Montana
Audubon office—or brought with you to the
Bird Festival. If you have further questions
contact Janet Ellis: jellis@mtaudubon.org.

**Thanks for your generous
contributions!**

Montana Audubon Sustainability Fund

Your registration form includes a donation
check box to help us build a restricted fund
that Montana Audubon specifically uses for
energy conservation, carbon neutrality and
related sustainability projects. Help our
organization move toward a low-carbon
future by contributing toward the
Sustainability Fund!

19th ANNUAL MONTANA AUDUBON BIRD FESTIVAL

June 8–10, 2018
Red Lion Hotel
Kalispell Montana

*Sandhill Crane
and colt*

Bob Marinka

CAKES FOR CONSERVATION!

One of the most enjoyable events at the annual festival is our dessert auction tradition: creative cakes and other delicious desserts are auctioned off to raise funds for bird conservation projects.

Proceeds are evenly split between Montana Audubon and the festival host chapter.

Flathead Audubon's portion of the dessert auction funds will support two vital projects: the Jewel Basin Hawk Watch, and the West Valley Wetlands project where viewing area improvements will be installed.

Montana Audubon's portion will be devoted to the Black Swift survey & monitoring project in and around Glacier National Park.

