



Three volunteers participate in Black Swift survey training in Glacier National Park, July 2017. Photo courtesy of Jeff Van Tine.

2018 CITIZEN SCIENCE OPPORTUNITIES

You don't need to be a professional biologist to contribute to science and have a great time doing it. Consider joining one of these citizen efforts to collect valuable information on the birds and ecosystems of Montana. We would like to thank Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks (MTFWP), Glacier National Park (GNP), Glacier National Park Conservancy, the Cadeau Foundation, the LEAW Foundation, and the Sargent Endowment for helping make this work possible! Please contact Amy Seaman with your interest and questions.



LONG-BILLED CURLEWS – In 2018 we are surveying for Long-billed Curlews in the Mission, Blackfoot, and Helena Valleys. Surveys are five to seven mile driving routes that require approximately 10, five-minute stops during which you look and listen for Long-billed Curlews and Sandhill Cranes. Surveys take place April 8th – May 31st. Information on available routes and how to sign up can be found at: <https://missionvalleycurlews.weebly.com/>



BLACK SWIFTS – In 2018 we are partnering with MTFWP, GNP, and Glacier National Park Conservancy on Black Swift surveys. We will be hosting three field trainings for volunteers; July 17th in West Glacier and July 19th and 20th at Holland Lake. Surveys will occur at waterfalls throughout western Montana and GNP. Searching for Black Swifts requires experienced backcountry travel; around creeks and waterfalls, in bear country, and during the evening. Surveys occur at dusk and may require camping. Surveys run July 20th – August 31st.



BLACK ROSY-FINCHES – In 2018 we will be partnering with MTFWP to survey for Black Rosy-finches along mountain ranges in southwestern Montana. Searching for Black Rosy-finches requires walking above tree-line below north-facing cliffs to locate birds in their boulder-field and talus habitats. These surveys require sometimes difficult hikes, potential overnight trips, and good backcountry travel experience. There are routes available in 19 mountain ranges. Surveys take place June – July. A survey website is in development.



CHIMNEY SWIFTS – In 2018 we will be partnering with MTFWP to survey for Chimney Swifts in eastern Montana. These surveys are very easy to access as they primarily take place in towns around large buildings with chimneys. Surveys will occur for 30 minutes before and after sunset. Surveys can be conducted in any eastern Montana town and take place in June and July. A survey website is in development but more information can be found at <http://mtaudubon.org/2017/06/chimney-swift-surveyors-needed/>



SHORT-EARED OWLS – In 2018 we will partner with MTFWP and the Owl Research Institute to survey Short-eared Owls across the state. Surveys are approximately five mile driving routes requiring 10 stops where you will look and listen for Short-eared Owls. This is a project of the Avian Knowledge Network and will assess Short-eared Owl populations across eight western states.



BREEDING BIRD SURVEYS – In 2018 we will again partner with MTFWP to help fill Breeding Bird Survey (BBS) routes across Montana. BBS routes (107 in Montana) are one of the country's longest running citizen science programs. Vacant survey routes can be found at: <https://www.pwrc.usgs.gov/bbs/index.cfm> Volunteers for BBS routes must be able to identify all potential bird species by sight and sound. Surveys take place from late May – early July.