

spring 2020



# SOARING RESULTS ACROSS THE BIG SKY

2019 ANNUAL REPORT

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THE NEXT  
GENERATION OF  
CONSERVATION  
STEWARDS

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Our mission 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.

Founded in 1976, Montana Audubon has built effective programs in public policy, education, and bird conservation to serve its members and Montana's nine community-based Audubon Chapters.

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Montana Audubon is a proud member organization of Montana Shares, a partnership of Montana-based nonprofits devoted to improving the quality of life in the Big Sky state.

## THE VIEW FROM ABOVE

It has long been recognized that connecting with the natural world through activities such as birdwatching can have a positive impact on our lives. I still remember first being introduced to this concept when reading E. O. Wilson's 1984 book, *Biophilia*, where he defined the Biophilia Hypothesis as "the urge to affiliate with other forms of life." More recently, Richard Louv breathed new life into this idea by referring to a lack of these kinds of interactions, especially in our youth, as "nature-deficit disorder." The healing power of nature, including birdwatching, has helped many of us get through trying times. Now that we face a new threat that has led to social isolation, perhaps birdwatching is the elixir we've all been looking for.



*Even as our daily lives are being disrupted, we stay laser-focused on our mission to promote appreciation, knowledge and conservation of Montana's native birds, other wildlife and natural ecosystems.*

As with so many other organizations, Montana Audubon has had to adjust to the new reality of dealing with the coronavirus outbreak. Closing our offices, homeschooling our children, canceling travel and in-person meetings with supporters like you are all foreign to us. However, we will not wait for life to get back to normal to continue fulfilling our mission.

Even as our daily lives are being disrupted, we stay laser-focused on our mission to promote appreciation, knowledge and conservation of Montana's native birds, other wildlife and natural ecosystems.

Birds have always provided so much to us so now is a great time to appreciate them even more. In this issue, you will not only learn about recent accomplishments in our 2019 Annual Report but also hear stories about how we provide children with connections to the natural world, a critical therapy during these challenging times. We encourage not only our children, but all of you to get outside as much as possible. We are fortunate to live in Montana where social distancing is easy to achieve thanks to the access we have to public lands and trails.

Thank you for your ongoing friendship and support through these tough times. I hope you are able to take solace in the fact that our important mission-related work endures, as sure as the birds continue to fly.

Yours in conservation,

Larry Berrin

*On the cover: Castle Reef on the Rocky Mountain Front  
John Lambing photo*

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# 2019

## ACCOMPLISHMENTS

**THANKS TO YOU,** Montana Audubon continues to greatly impact the conservation of native birds, other wildlife and their habitats across Montana.

In 2019, we accomplished much together, from defeating bad bills to engaging thousands. In honor of your friendship and support, and because we have so much yet to accomplish, we have formed key partnerships that are poised to yield even greater impacts in the future.

So, stay tuned, and in the meantime, discover what we accomplished together in 2019.

### CITIZEN SCIENCE

- **Expanded Montana eBird**, a powerful bird sighting data collection system which now includes approximately 277,000 checklists provided by more than 9,000 birders

- Found Montana's fifth nesting colony of **American White Pelicans**

- **Engaged 53 volunteers** in citizen science efforts for 11 species of conservation concern

- ▼ Helped tag two pairs of **Harlequin Ducks** in Glacier National Park to track their annual movement



Amy Seaman

- ↑ **Recorded 87 Curlew sightings** in western Montana by 30 volunteers

- Conducted more than **20 songbird and noxious weed surveys** in Canyon Ferry and Madison River Important Bird Area (IBA), plus water bird surveys in three IBAs

- Discovered eight new **Chimney Swift** nesting sites

- **Found four new Black Swift colonies**, bringing the total in Montana to more than 50 (See story on page 10)

### POLICY & ADVOCACY

- Worked with our conservation partners to pass permanent reauthorization of the **Land and Water Conservation Fund** (See update on page 11)

- **Mobilized thousands of advocates** at the Montana Capitol during public lands and renewable energy rallies

- **Supported Recovering America's Wildlife Act**, a U.S. congressional bill which aims to secure \$29 million for wildlife conservation in Montana



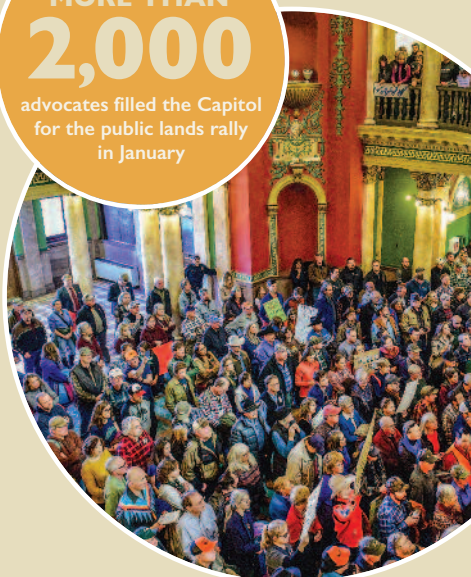
Bob Martinka



John Lambing

**MORE THAN 2,000**

advocates filled the Capitol for the public lands rally in January



Eliza Wiley



# 2019

## ACCOMPLISHMENTS

### EDUCATION & OUTREACH

#### MONTANA AUDUBON CENTER

- **Served 1,800 4th grade students** from all 32 Billings schools by the ANTS (Audubon Naturalists in the Schools) program, representing 10% growth
- Provided 1,600 students with school and youth **group field trips**
- **Awarded 44 scholarships** for summer camps, a program that grew by 30%
- ▲ Taught 48 students through our **Fledgling Preschool**, an increase of 300%
- **Engaged 251 volunteers** at the Montana Audubon Center
- **Connected 26,000 people with nature** at the Montana Audubon Center, including 8,000 students



#### WINGS ACROSS THE BIG SKY BIRD FESTIVAL

- ▼ Convened the **20th Annual Wings Across the Big Sky Bird Festival** in Glasgow, attracting 298 attendees to 25 birding trips and five educational presentations



Bob Martinka

### PARTNERSHIPS

- ▲ Worked with Montana Natural Heritage Program to jointly employ our first **Avian Data Technician Specialist** whose projects included Great Blue Heron mapping (See story on page 14)



John Lambing

- ▲ Formed a partnership with National Audubon Society to launch the **Audubon Conservation Ranching** program in Montana

- 2019 Annual Report continues on page 17.

### JOIN US

While we are very proud of what we have accomplished together, we must look forward and set out on our shared path toward continued success. So much still needs to be accomplished amidst these challenging times.

With your continued support, we will prevail with soaring results. We look forward to continuing our work together, to *promote appreciation, knowledge and conservation of Montana's native birds, other wildlife, and natural ecosystems and to safeguard biological diversity for current and future generations.*

Continue being an integral part of our success by connecting, joining, donating and volunteering. Visit our website for details: [mtaudubon.org](http://mtaudubon.org).

*"Fly through barriers and soar to new heights. Dream big. Believe you can achieve and live strong."*

— Cheryl Schultz

John Lambing



# THE NEXT GENERATION OF CONSERVATION STEWARDS

## TWO YEARS AGO,

a high school student at the Montana Audubon Center picked a piece of paper out of a hat. Written on that paper were the words “American Robin.” He then set out with a group, each student outfitted with a bird to find.

The students made their way to the cottonwood groves along the Yellowstone River. About half a mile in, there it was – a single robin in the middle of the trail. It would be an understatement to say that this student was excited. He not only identified the bird but also called the rest of the group over to have a look. Through binoculars, they all watched it hop away into the grass. For that student, spotting his bird was a moment of connection.

You have probably experienced a similar spark of connection with nature that motivates your support of our conservation work – maybe it was the musky smell downwind of a mule deer, the cold of a creek you played in for hours, the scratchy tree you climbed to a secret fort, or the excitement you felt when you spotted



a new bird while hiking in a nearby park.

While your reasons for being part of the conservation movement have likely evolved to be more sophisticated or intellectual, those moments of connection are at the core of your love for nature. Engaging people

in the protection of nature is a lot easier when they’ve already fallen in love with it.

## SEVEN MINUTES, SEVEN HOURS

People can’t form relationships unless they have time and opportunity to do so. In a world overloaded with screens and schedules, today’s children and, let’s face it, adults are not spending enough time outside. The general consensus among researchers is that the average American child spends **seven or fewer minutes** a day in unstructured outdoor activity, and **seven or more hours** in front of a screen. This significant cultural shift, from even a few decades ago, not only negatively impacts our physical health, but also the health of the conservation movement.

## EDUCATION IS KEY

It’s no secret that the average age of participation in most conservation organizations, including Montana Audubon, continues to move toward an older demographic. At the same time, the work of conservation organizations is more critical than ever. But if we don’t have children who develop memories, connections, and love for nature, we will not have citizens who are motivated to protect and preserve the natural world.

Engaging new and younger participants in that work is a critical investment in the future of the conservation movement and our environment. A “conservation culture” is best built by well-informed citizens who have the knowledge and tools to act with a personal relationship with nature at their core.

Recognizing this vital need, Montana Audubon invests in the future of conservation through our diverse, interconnected programs. The success of our Montana Audubon Center in Billings is testament to the interest people have in making connections with nature and our capacity to meet that need. This year, we plan to expand our education programs to other parts of the state by partnering with public land agencies in Montana to launch the Audubon in Parks initiative. Our citizen science efforts, such as the upcoming Great Blue Heron nest surveys, engage people directly in research that informs conservation.

*Engaging people in the protection of nature is a lot easier when they’ve already fallen in love with it.*

Finally, we engage citizens as advocates for sound conservation policy in Montana.

Like the robin returning north every year to rear the next generation, it is up to all of us to nurture the connections between our children and nature. Robert Michael Pyle once asked “What is the extinction of a condor to a child who has never seen a wren?” Through our thoughtful, multipronged approach, we can ensure these childhood experiences endure, and by doing so, we will achieve our goal of cultivating the next generation of conservation stewards in Montana.





## Tracking Montana's Climate with our Binoculars

We know climate change is impacting birds. Scientists behind National Audubon's 2019 Survival by Degrees report showed us the impacts could be dramatic; nearly half of all U.S. bird species could struggle to adapt. All North American species, including over 430 in Montana, are expected to experience some climate-related threats.

For the report, researchers created a grid of bird observations blanketing the U.S. in 1-km squares.

Because over 140 million bird observations were analyzed, the output permitted zip-code level information, predicting a range shift for many species. In Montana, western forest species are especially vulnerable; our nuthatches – Red-breasted, White-breasted, and Pygmy – are expected to undergo range shifts. Similarly, the American Goldfinch's range is expected to be affected by changing weather, including hotter springs, increased fire activity, increased rainfall, and other



American Goldfinch

threats that alter habitat quality and availability.

While shifting ranges are only one piece of the climate change puzzle, they are perhaps the most visible, and they tell us a lot about how groups or individual species are responding. Tracking geographic-scale shifts for individual species poses a difficult challenge, but for common species like nuthatches and goldfinches, their statewide presence makes them viable candidates. Breaking up the tracking effort into the nationwide 1-km squares makes the task manageable, and that's exactly what Audubon's Climate Watch does. By conducting short point-counts in select areas for select species, citizen scientists can test Audubon's model predictions into the 2020s.

This winter, Montana Audubon piloted the Climate Watch program in Montana. Volunteers surveyed the first 11 "squares" statewide, searching for our winter nuthatch trio. Climate Watch is now set to continue with survey periods each winter and spring.

You can learn more and get involved by visiting our "Ongoing Citizen Science Projects" webpage. A special thanks to volunteers during our first season of Climate Watch monitoring!



Learn more and get involved by visiting our "Ongoing Citizen Science Projects" webpage at [mtaudubon.org](http://mtaudubon.org)

In Montana, western forest species like this **Red-breasted nuthatch** are expected to undergo range shifts.

## UPDATE:

### 2020 WINGS ACROSS THE BIG SKY BIRD FESTIVAL – LEWISTOWN

Due to coronavirus concerns, Montana Audubon has made the difficult decision to cancel this year's Wings Across the Big Sky Bird Festival in Lewistown, which would have been our 21st annual event.

Though we are saddened by this development, the safety and health of our supporters, volunteers, and staff is of utmost importance during these unprecedented times.

We are, however, leaning forward and looking toward the future.

**We have rescheduled this unique event for June 4–6, 2021 at the Yogo Inn, Lewistown.**

Please mark your calendars and stay tuned for more information as it becomes available in the next year.

wings   
across the big sky



## Tracking Glacier's Ghosts

For millennia, snow-capped mountains and alpine lakes have provided vital water sources for the waterfall-nesting **Black Swift**. Like Montana's suite of nuthatches, the Black Swift is a western forest species that scientists speculate is declining, in part, from climate change, which has resulted in reduced annual snowpack and warmer, drier winters. For four decades, scientists have observed about a 6% annual decline in North American Black Swift numbers.

Unlike our nuthatches, though, very few Black Swift observations have been recorded, making it difficult for scientists to understand changes in their range or the threats they are facing.

With their remote alpine breeding habitat, a breeding range stretching from Central America to Canada, and foraging at more than 10,000 feet, surveying and defining an occupied range pose tough challenges.

Therefore, we have worked for seven years to collect more accurate Black Swift breeding information. As we crunched the numbers following the 2019 season, it became apparent our work has achieved a few milestones:

- Discovery of the 51st and 52nd state locations with evidence of nesting
- Location of Glacier National Park's 40th known nesting location



- Finding Glacier National Park's first nesting site from 1962 occupied
- Cumulatively, recorded evidence of nesting at 27 waterfall sites, following 101 surveys

And momentum is building! Entering our 8th year, we have taken on leadership roles in cross-boundary partnerships, connecting burgeoning work north of the border with multiple state efforts throughout the Rockies. For example, we are training Park Canada's biologists on standardized survey techniques.

Now we have a way you can help celebrate these milestones of discovery for the Black Swift in Montana and support our continued research. Designed by artist Bryan Busby, we are pleased to introduce our

new **Black Swift shirts**. All net proceeds from Black Swift t-shirt sales directly support the Black Swift Project and bring capacity to partnerships we are driving forward.

Search "Black Swift" on our website for more!



## A "Great" Survey to Take Part In!

Montana Audubon has been leading citizen science projects for more than ten years, collecting data on some of our most common and also most mystifying species. And now we are preparing to survey one of our most iconic.

**The Great Blue Heron** is a state species of conservation concern, their status reflecting a 1.4% annual statewide population decline (Breeding Bird Surveys 1966 – 2015). Reliant on intact river and streamside habitat, provided primarily by cottonwood forests, this colonial nesting waterbird and its rookery

sites, though quite visible, can be surprisingly difficult to access. With rookeries all over Montana, surveys are most often conducted

by aircraft, an expensive and challenging method.

Therefore, we have partnered with the Montana Natural Heritage Program to ramp up statewide coverage of heron rookery surveys. After surveying five sections of river-based Important Bird Areas using Google Earth's aerial photography and satellite imagery, the next step is to get into the field and confirm our findings. Remotely, we found 94% of historic rookeries and nine potentially new rookeries. Now we need citizen volunteers throughout Montana to help confirm our "desktop" survey findings by visiting historic rookery locations and helping us estimate nest occupancy.

So, join us in confirming viable Great Blue Heron rookeries this field season! Everything you need to know about this exciting volunteer opportunity can be found on [montanabirdsurveys.com](http://montanabirdsurveys.com).



Bob Martinka



## Land and Water Conservation Fund

In early March 2020, the Great American Outdoors Act (GAOA), S. 3422, was introduced in the Senate, combining full, dedicated funding for the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) with needed deferred maintenance funding for our National Park System. Prior to the coronavirus outbreak, a Senate floor vote for S. 3422 was tentatively scheduled for the week after March recess.

Due to economic stimulus packages and changes in the Congressional schedule, the Senate floor vote on GAOA was put on hold. Now Congress is debating several economic stimulus packages and what to include in them. As Montanans, we know how important our public lands are to our outdoor recreation economy and way of life. We hope you'll join us in encouraging Congress to include the GAOA in an upcoming stimulus package to fund our parks, trails and access to public spaces, as well as the conservation

of native bird and other wildlife species and their habitats.

Montana Audubon has been working tirelessly with our LWCF Coalition to cheer on Senator Tester's and Senator Daines' work championing legislation for full, dedicated LWCF funding. We have also been working with Congressman Gianforte and his staff, communicating to them that LWCF enables wildlife habitat and access to our public lands, which bird watchers and conservationists like you prioritize, in hopes that he will join our Senators in support of full, dedicated funding for LWCF.

Thank you all for your tireless support, emails, postcard signing, and loud voices at our LWCF events in Great Falls and Billings, in our quest to realize full, dedicated funding for the LWCF. We are very close, and it is all because of YOUR good work!



## Sensory Experience at the Center

Speaking to a Billings auditorium of teachers in 2015, journalist and podcast producer Amy Martin observed that the word “listen” can have radically different meanings. We can say it loudly, “LISTEN!”, and it is a stern directive spoken with intended power. Or we can slow down and offer a thoughtful invitation to share an experience – “Let’s pause and listen...”

The last few years at the Montana Audubon Center have been a time of tremendous expansion. Now, an average of 80–100 people a day are being taught by Center staff, both on-site and in other locations. Through every program, our core is evident: Creating opportunities for personal, meaningful connection with nature. Those connections are facilitated at the Center in the thoughtful version of sensory experience outlined by Martin, “Let’s pause and listen...” A great deal of power resides in pausing and listening.

### How is this approach deployed at the Center?

Elementary students encounter plants during their fall field trip through a four-step observation process: focus, observe with all senses, describe in as much detail as possible, and then compare and ask questions. Starting with the mint in our medicinal garden, students touch and smell and look closely before doing journal entries about their observations.

*Through every program, our core is evident: Creating opportunities for personal, meaningful connection with nature.*

Our youngest program participants, the toddlers in the Nature Nuts program, have complete sessions dedicated to exploring with all senses. At that age, kids learn so much when they pick up smooth rocks, squish their fingers in mud or observe color and pattern variations in different species of birds.

A popular summer camp activity is “Meet a Tree” where kids are blindfolded and get to know a tree through touch and smell alone, and then find it again when blindfolds are removed. Through the rest of the week, campers will walk, unprompted, up to dozens of trees to make observations about each one.

The next time you come to a Center program or are outside, take a moment to slow down, see, hear, and smell what you can. And if there’s someone else around, invite them to share in the experience. Surely, you will find your sensory experience in nature to not only be educational, but therapeutic.



## Practicing Social Distancing at Summer Camp

The Montana Audubon Center in Billings is busy planning for summer day camps and by the time summer rolls around, we hope your children will be looking forward to stepping outside again and ready for some nature adventuring! We do expect that there will be social distancing guidelines still in place and we are closely monitoring the situation to be able to adapt our camps to meet those recommendations. Our staff is ready this year with face masks, sanitizing wipes, and 6-foot long sticks for measuring space between campers and staff.

The good news is that each of our camps is already designed to be a small-group experience with more than 80% of camp

time spent outside. In total there are more than 30 week-long day camps for grades K–8 and of course our popular Summer Fledglings program for ages 3–5. This year we plan on eliminating all large group gatherings, overnight experiences, field trips, and will adhere to social distancing by maintaining small groups from drop-off to pick-up. As always, we will have high staff-to-camper ratio and emphasize education and individual exploration of the natural world.

**The safety** of our campers, staff, and community are always at the forefront of our planning. For up-to-date information, check our website and Facebook page or feel free to contact us.





# Montana Natural Heritage Program

In October 2019, Montana Audubon and the Montana Natural Heritage Program (MTNHP) initiated a new and exciting partnership. As a result, we jointly hired **Bo Crees** as our new Avian Technician Data Specialist, whose goal is to ensure that Montana bird species data is centralized and curated within the state library, available to partner organizations, ready for use within environmental impact statements, and accessible to the general public. Additionally, the new full-time position supports crucial research, Montana eBird data management, and Species of Concern projects.

The work provides a critical link between the thousands of bird observations Montanans gather each year and the picture they paint of on-the-ground conservation needs.

Bird communities are dynamic, and populations can change rapidly. Therefore, routine bird record review for validity and accuracy, and appending of new records, especially for Species of Concern, is crucial. Citizen contributions like the Christmas Bird Count create stacks of such records. Bo has been hard at work reviewing these

thousands of provisional records for rare migrants, like scoters, and migratory winter residents like the Tree Sparrow.

Bo also completed work on an experimental Great Blue Heron mapping project, testing the practicality of using aerial imagery to locate heron rookeries. This iconic species, one of concern in Montana, has seen significant decline since the 1960s, yet most of our knowledge about statewide rookery locations are largely based on decades-old data. The mapping effort was fruitful, with

the probable discovery of new nesting locations to be confirmed in the field this season. The partnership also seeks to generate a better understanding of the heron’s vulnerable status.

We are looking forward to our first field season with the additional capacity provided by Bo. This spring, he will be leaving his computer screens behind to hit the trails with our varied survey teams, helping to keep the connection with nature alive in today’s citizen scientists.

## Montana Audubon Grants Support Wildlife Habitat

Each year for the past 25 years, Montana Audubon has awarded small grants to organizations in support of research and education projects directed toward wildlife habitat conservation. Funds are awarded from earnings generated by the Audubon Wildlife Fund of Montana, a permanent endowment. Supported 2020 projects include:

### Alpha-Batz: A–Z, Everything You Need to Know about Bats

Montana Fish Wildlife and Parks will assemble a bat educational trunk to be utilized by Region 5’s three biologists, therefore building public support and excitement for bat conservation in rural southcentral Montana.

### Jewel Basin Hawk Watch

For the 13th year in a row, Flathead Audubon Society will conduct raptor monitoring at the Jewel Basin Hawk Watch, tracking long-term changes in Northern Rocky Mountain raptor populations.

### Osprey: A Watershed Health Parameter

The Clark Fork Watershed Education Program will develop and introduce a 7th grade science curriculum in Missoula that exposes students to osprey research happening in their own backyards and in their watersheds.

### Planting, Protecting & Nurturing Native Shrubs on the Missouri Riverbank

Upper Missouri Watershed Alliance will plant and nurture native shrubs along a section of the Missouri Riverbank, therefore shading the river, providing food and cover for birds and other wildlife, and reducing erosion.

### Survey of Mountain Plovers in Rosebud and Garfield Counties

FaunaWest will survey an important remaining population of the declining Mountain Plover, which could play a role in restoring the species’ numbers in Montana.



Mountain Plover

Bob Martinka

## BIRDING THE ECUADORIAN AMAZON

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**Join this 12-day trip to discover the remarkable avian diversity within northern Ecuador’s multitude of ecosystems.** Exceptionally rich in biodiversity, Ecuador is a birder’s mecca, with more than 1,600 species including 40% of the world’s hummingbirds.

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For more information about Merlin Tours, please access the website: [www.merlinbirding.com](http://www.merlinbirding.com)

This upcoming Ecuador tour is available through a partnership between Merlin Tours and Holbrook Travel. To learn more details or to register for this trip, please visit the Holbrook Travel website: [holbrook.travel/merlinbirds-ec20](http://holbrook.travel/merlinbirds-ec20)



## Board Profile

# Michele Falivene

In Hamilton, MT, you can witness Golden and Bald eagles circling high above ponderosa pines on Michele Falivene's property. In conversation, Michele described her involvement as a citizen science participant in a Bitterroot Valley project, which focuses on the study of eagle migration and toxicology. Her unique role as a nature photographer is observing and capturing amazing behaviors. She says, "I hope that, through my photography, I can cultivate conversation, a sense of purpose, advocacy for birds, and above all, educate people. It is so important that young children experience nature and get outdoors for crucial developmental benefits."

Michele brings this passion for education and advocacy to Montana Audubon's board, where she also supports development. Her dedication today stems from her youth in Massachusetts' Green Mountains, where endless backcountry exploration



*"I hope that, through my photography, I can cultivate conversation, a sense of purpose, advocacy for birds, and above all, educate people."*

opportunities sparked a flame. Michele's love of bird conservation blossomed after being chosen to join an ecological shorebird study in Cape Code, MA. From there, her love of the outdoors and recreation drew her to Montana's big sky. She graduated from Montana State University, studying education, outdoor recreation, and childhood developmental psychology. Michele raised her family in Colorado while working as a wealth strategist for major banks.

Michele always knew she would come back to Montana to continue her dedication to conservation and outdoor education. In 2015, once in Hamilton, she joined and became a board member of the Bitterroot Audubon Society. Her involvement and advocacy with the Bitterroot chapter, which focuses on efforts to protect wildlife, working lands, and water in her community, led her to her current and vital role as one of our statewide at-large board members. As her voice grows within our organization, she is focused on developing and building new relationships and advocating our mission, with camera in-hand, of course.



Wood Duck photo by Michele Falivene

## Mobilize your Passion for Birds

You can make a meaningful impact for the birds of Montana by choosing the Bird Habitat License plate. The initial cost is \$40 which includes a \$20 donation that directly supports our work to ensure long-term protection for critical wildlife habitat.

As a proud owner of this eye-catching plate, your vehicle will feature an American Avocet, Ruddy Duck, Lewis's Woodpecker, and a trio of Black-billed Magpies—on a Rocky Mountain Front backdrop. Proudly show your support for bird conservation and support Montana Audubon's work to ensure long-term protection for critical native bird and wildlife habitat!

For more details visit [www.mtaudubon.org](http://www.mtaudubon.org)



MONTANA AUDUBON

## SOARING RESULTS ACROSS THE BIG SKY

## Thank You for Supporting Montana Audubon

Thanks to generous and faithful donors like you, Montana Audubon continues to conserve Montana's native species and wildlife habitats. Without you, our work would not be possible. The following people contributed \$100 or more to this vital work between April 2019 and March 2020. Thank you! Special thanks to donors who made gifts in honor or in memory of friends and loved ones!

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more...



Solitary Sandpiper

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Special recognition to the following for recent gifts in their honor:

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2019 FINANCIALS

Thanks to you and all of our faithful supporters, Montana Audubon has maintained a strong financial position, which empowers us to continue the conservation of native birds, other wildlife and their habitats across Montana. You make this possible through your much-appreciated support of our vital conservation work. Thank you!

Statement of Financial Position

Unrestricted Net Assets	\$ 566,891
Board Designated Endowment	\$ 1,004,224
Temporarily Restricted Net Assets	\$ 30,731
Permanently Restricted Net Assets	\$ 51,744
Total Net Assets	\$ 1,653,559

12-month Fiscal Year Ending 9-30-19

Revenue

Earned Income	\$ 375,891
Contributions	\$ 247,907
Grants & Contracts	\$ 194,258
Investment Income	\$ 64,640
Total	\$ 882,696

Expenses

Programs	\$ 719,733
Administrative	\$ 102,219
Fundraising	\$ 34,070
Total	\$ 856,022

84% of funds directly support conservation programs

Montana Audubon is a nonprofit, tax-exempt organization under 501(c)3 of the Internal Revenue Code. This financial information is drawn from audited financial statements by the accounting firm Douglas Wilson & Company, PC.



## Special Thanks

With sincere gratitude, we thank you, our institutional supporters and partners. Thanks to your engagement, our critical work is made possible and is ever more impactful.

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Bitterroot Audubon Society  
Five Valleys Audubon Society  
Flathead Audubon Society  
Last Chance Audubon Society  
Mission Mountain Audubon Society  
Pintler Audubon Society  
Sacajawea Audubon Society  
Upper Missouri Breaks Audubon Society  
Yellowstone Valley Audubon Society

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Billings Community Foundation  
Billings Junior Women's Club  
Cadeau Foundation  
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Wolf Creek Charitable Foundation

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Abbott Valley Homestead Avitas Inc.  
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Yellowstone Naturopathic Clinic, P.C.

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Montana Conservation Corps  
MT Dept. of Administration, Title and Registration Bureau  
MT Dept. of Commerce  
MT Dept. of Natural Resources & Conservation  
MT Fish Wildlife and Parks  
MT Natural Heritage Program  
Smithsonian Institution  
U.S. Bureau of Land Management, Montana-Dakotas  
U.S. Forest Service, Helena-Lewis & Clark National Forest  
Yellowstone Conservation District

### Organizations and Educational Institutions

American Prairie Reserve  
Billings Catholic Schools  
Billings Public Schools  
Billings Public Schools Office of Indian Education  
Blue Creek Schools  
Crow Agency School  
Canyon Creek School  
Elder Grove School  
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University of Montana Wildlife Society, Montana Chapter  
Yellowstone River Parks Association



Ovenbird

Bob Martinka

## Thank You, Volunteers, for Giving Your Time

Thank you, Montana Audubon volunteers, for so freely giving your valuable time to help us meet our conservation mission. You have not only offered your time, but also your expertise, humor, perspective, and so much more.

### Citizen Science Volunteers

Kim Alexander  
Travis Brakefield  
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Joe and Sue Rothermel  
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Lynda Saul  
Sandy Schull  
Shawn Service  
Rebecca Sharp Hamlin  
Wyatt Smith  
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Cynthia Swidler  
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Cynthia Swidler  
Darcy Thomas  
Molly Todd  
Stephen Turner  
Anyia Tyson  
Jeff Van Tine  
Carrie Voss  
Raylene Wall  
Pam Willison  
Kristin Wokanick

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EMS Dispatch  
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Kiwanis Riverside Builders Club  
MSU-Billings ORF's  
Rimrock Foundation  
Skyview High School Life Skills  
Wells Fargo  
West High School Life Skills  
Yegen Financial Team  
Yellowstone River Parks Association

## Nominate a Conservation Leader for a 2020 Montana Audubon Award

Nominations are now being accepted for Montana Audubon's 2020 awards. Consider nominating someone you know for Conservationist of the Year; Environmental Educator of the Year; a Special Achievement award, Citizen Scientist of the Year; or a Lifetime Achievement award!

Nomination forms can be found on our website [mtaudubon.org](http://mtaudubon.org). The deadline for nominations is June 22, 2020. Please submit via email to [info@mtaudubon.org](mailto:info@mtaudubon.org) or by mail to Montana Audubon, PO Box 595 Helena, MT 59624.





# Make a Special Gift to Montana Audubon Today!

From providing teachers with homeschool lesson plans and remotely advocating for the Land and Water Conservation Fund, to connecting citizen scientists with safe, rewarding field experiences,

**Montana Audubon is adapting to these challenging times and working more diligently than ever to meet our conservation mission in new ways.**

However, as with nearly every other nonprofit, we are experiencing negative impacts as a result of coronavirus, specifically reduced program service revenue and a potential decrease in donations. Therefore, **we ask that you consider making a special gift to Montana Audubon today,** in any amount that is personally meaningful to you.

It's easier than ever to make a gift, as the CARES Act mandated that if you take the standard deduction on your 2020 tax return, you can claim a brand new "above-the-line" deduction of up to \$300 for cash donations to charity this year.

With support from friends like you, and through our dedicated staff and board of directors, we will persevere. In advance, thank you for your generous gift, which will empower us to continue our critical conservation mission!

**To donate online, go to:**  
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To give via check, send to:  
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To discuss the full range of ways to support Montana Audubon, such as planned gifts and advantages of the Montana Endowment Tax Credit, call or email us:  
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