

Clark Fork River/Grass Valley IBA

Important Bird Areas are sites that provide essential habitat for threatened, unique, or particularly abundant species, during breeding, migration, or winter seasons



**Lazuli Buntings
and Calliope
Hummingbirds**
rely on habitats
within this IBA.

The Clark Fork River-Grass Valley IBA encompasses about 35 km of river corridor and adjacent uplands between Missoula and Huson. More than 230 species of birds have been recently documented in the area. Species of continental concern nesting here include Bald Eagle, Peregrine Falcon, White-throated Swift, Lewis' Woodpecker, Red-naped Sapsucker, and Willow Flycatcher. Habitats include cottonwood gallery forests, riparian willows, diverse wetlands, grasslands, woody draws, and pasturelands, with most of the area in private ownership.

Birders have been aware of the habitat and wildlife values of this site for many years. Since 2000, Five Valleys Audubon Society has been working with Five Valleys Land Trust to increase community awareness about the importance of this IBA to birds and other wildlife and its vulnerability to development. Many conservation opportunities exist, from habitat management to establishment of conservation easements. The pressing threats of development and habitat loss give urgent priority to these and other conservation actions.



Clark Fork River Grass Valley

*Important
Bird Area*



Notable bird species associated with the IBA

- > Bald Eagle
- > Calliope Hummingbird
- > Hooded Merganser
- > Lazuli Bunting
- > Lewis' Woodpecker (above)
- > Pectoral Sandpiper
- > Peregrine Falcon
- > Pileated Woodpecker
- > Red-eyed Vireo

Coordinated by BirdLife International, the Important Bird Areas (IBA) Program is a global initiative aimed at identifying and conserving the most important places for birds. The IBA Program's foundation emphasizes science-based identification, assessment, and conservation of birds and the habitats needed to survive. IBAs rely on local stewardship and focus on engaging individuals, private landowners, local communities, businesses, partner organizations, and government agencies in site conservation. Important Bird Area designation does not confer legal or regulatory status to a site. Instead, participation in conservation is voluntary on the part of landowners and land managers. IBA boundaries serve as an initial spatial guide and help identify areas that warrant prioritization for protection and conservation actions.

You can help with the conservation of this IBA by submitting your bird observations through Montana Natural Heritage Program or at ebird.org, an online bird sighting database.

woodpecker photo by Bob Evans



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