

fall 2021

MONTANA
AUDUBON

CELEBRATING 45 YEARS OF CONSERVATION

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HONORING
NORM SCHOENTHAL

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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 seeks to create an environment in which all of Montana's native bird species have healthy, sustainable populations, ensured by long-term habitat security. Montana Audubon uses science, conservation education, and public policy work to protect our state's incomparable wildlife and landscapes.



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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.



*On the cover: Chestnut-collared Longspur
Bob Martinka photo*

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THE VIEW FROM ABOVE

Farewell Lord God Bird

I still remember the excitement I felt holding my first field guide to birds and flipping through the colorful plates, imagining one day I would see these charismatic things with wings. Growing up in the city, surrounded by Rock Pigeons and House Sparrows, I remember thinking that birds like the Bohemian Waxwing, Red Crossbill, and Evening Grosbeak just couldn't exist in real life. Then I turned to the Picidae section and saw the Ivory-billed Woodpecker. I still remember reading the description: over 20" in length, with wingspan well over two feet, the largest woodpecker in the U.S. found in old-growth forests in the southeastern U.S. and Cuba. Unfortunately, its dependence on these shrinking habitats made its survival, and my chance of ever seeing it, unlikely. So you can imagine how my heart sank when I recently heard the news that the iconic "Lord God Bird" was officially declared extinct.



Survival of wildlife is not by accident but through... thoughtful decision making.

Unfortunately, the disappearances of the Ivory-billed Woodpecker, and the 22 other species declared extinct this past month, are not unique. A recent study in the journal Science determined that there are nearly 3 billion fewer birds in North America than in 1970 – a decline of roughly 29%. These numbers are staggering, and it's easy to get disheartened by the tragic trajectory many species are on. For 45 years we have dedicated our work to conserving Montana's native birds, other wildlife, and natural ecosystems. This newsletter is devoted to telling that story, but embedded in these pages is also hope.

Someone once said that the west is blessed with the kind of landscapes whose scale outflanks the mind's ability to comprehend them, and that is certainly true in Montana, but I wonder what our landscapes would be like without the birds and other wildlife that animate them. The loss of the Ivory-billed Woodpecker is now a reality, and its extinction should drive our conservation work and the race to protect species that are still around us.

We have learned over the years that the survival of wildlife is not by accident but through scientific research that leads to thoughtful decision making. Extinction can no longer be accepted as a natural occurrence when we know we can take action to prevent it from occurring. That is why, with your support, our important work continues – hopefully for another 45 years!

Yours in Conservation,



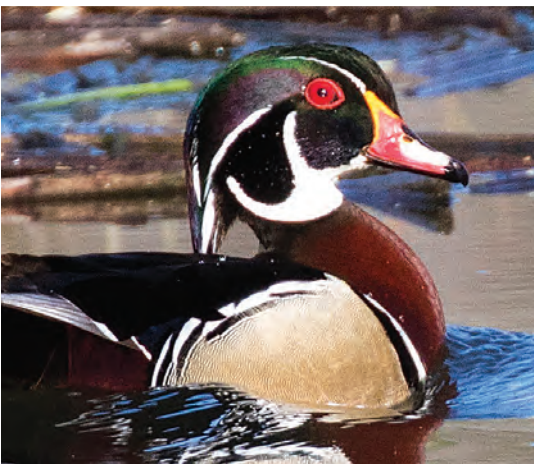
Larry Berrin, Executive Director



MONTANA AUDUBON



OF CONSERVATION



John Lambing

All bird photos courtesy of Bob Martinka

“Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has.” – Margaret Mead



ON SEPTEMBER 25, 1976, perhaps with the spirit of Margaret Mead in their hearts, six representatives from three state Audubon Society Chapters (Last Chance, Sacajawea, and Yellowstone Valley) gathered together and created an organization that would stretch beyond each of their local communities to be a unified voice for birds, other wildlife, and their habitats across the entire state. The “Montana Audubon Council” was born and began its role as a quiet but effective leader in protecting Montana’s rich birdlife.

The original focus of this group was to develop a strong conservation presence in the state legislature. At the time, there were many well-organized advocates for big game animal species, but no real support existed for “nongame wildlife,” a classification covering the more than 430 species of birds found in Montana.

SINCE OUR FOUNDING, Montana Audubon has maintained a presence during state legislative sessions to promote our conservation agenda. As testimony to our early effectiveness, in 1983 we helped pass into law the “Nongame Checkoff” option which, to this day, appears on Montana state tax forms, enabling taxpayers to make a quick and easy contribution each tax season to support the Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife & Parks’ nongame conservation efforts.

Our policy program remains the foundation upon which Montana Audubon was built and has yielded some of our most important, lasting achievements. In addition to blocking scores of anti-conservation bills and defending core environmental laws over our 45-year history, we’ve also helped pass important legislation to regulate subdivisions, manage invasive species, and protect critical riparian habitat.

continued



In 1976, a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens created an organization that would be a unified voice for birds, other wildlife, and their habitats across the entire state.



45
YEARS
OF CONSERVATION



Bob Martinka



*Senator Tester
speaks at a rally
in Great Falls*

*Montana Audubon
has built a strong
reputation when it
comes to wildlife and
habitat protection.*



OUR FEDERAL POLICY WORK has focused primarily on protecting our public lands and is demonstrated in major wins over the last few years. In 2019, we led a campaign in Montana, highlighted by rallies in Great Falls and Billings, to garner support for the Land & Water Conservation Fund (LWCF), leading to full and permanent funding for this important conservation funding. While LWCF will not directly fund our work, it will provide money for land acquisition projects that safeguard our natural areas and water resources and support further recreational opportunities. That same year, Montana Audubon took action against the federal government for the first time in its history to conserve the Greater Sage-grouse and its critical habitat in Montana.

The resulting actions challenged federal sales which leased large amounts of sage-grouse habitat in the west. In May 2020, The U.S. District Court for the District of Montana issued a ruling in our favor on the first phase of the case. The win protects 336,000 acres of sage-grouse habitat in Montana and Wyoming from future oil and gas development.

CONSERVATION SCIENCE has also been an important facet of our work. From monitoring climate-sensitive Black Swifts nesting high in the glaciated backcountry to protecting vulnerable grassland bird species down in the valleys, we have learned that the conservation of birds and other wildlife is best achieved when we use solid data to understand what is happening on the ground. Through our new Audubon Conservation Ranching initiative, Montana Audubon has brought robust science to the table when it comes to wildlife and habitat protection in premiere grassland and sagebrush ecosystems.

And along the way we have worked to recognize the important role citizen science can play in accomplishing our ambitious goals. Our citizen science programs now target data collection on almost a dozen state Species of Concern, and in 2018, we partnered with the Montana WILD Center and the University of Montana Bird Ecology Lab to launch Montana eBird. This is now the main tool used by avian citizen scientists to learn about the latest avian research in the state. In addition, our strong partnership with the Montana Natural Heritage Program has made possible data sharing between



eBird and the state zoological database, adding hundreds of thousands of bird observations to state records and Species of Concern research projects.

WITH A LONG-TERM PERSPECTIVE, we also recognized that for conservation to have a future, Montana Audubon would have to take an active role in connecting young people to the wonders of nature. By the early 2000s, discussions with educators and conservationists in the Billings area eventually developed into a partnership that evolved into the construction and launch of the Montana Audubon Center in 2009. Today, the Center has a vital presence in the community, reaching thousands of people of all ages and backgrounds each year with a diverse pallet of experiential, science-based education programs, creating a culture of conservation in Montana's largest city.

AS WE LOOK TO THE NEXT 45 YEARS, we remain laser-focused on our founders' goals of creating a single voice for the voiceless in the Last Best Place. And although we've grown in size as an organization, we have not forgotten the spirit of the small group of individuals that gathered nearly a half a century ago to create us. Conservation education and public policy backed by sound science will continue to be the focus of our work as we face a growing and changing state. Today, our most vulnerable species and habitats are at even greater risk, so we have strengthened our commitment to the values that united that small group back in 1976.

New challenges have emerged over the years, and the dedication of countless Montana Audubon leaders, staff, and volunteers has allowed us to meet those challenges. We face the future armed with that dedication, and we are determined to fight for birds, other wildlife, and the habitats that sustain them for the next 45 years and beyond.

Governor Bullock signs SB 260, the Sage-grouse Stewardship Act that Montana Audubon helped write and pass, with many uncommon allies, in the 64th Montana Legislature.

The Montana Audubon Center reaches people of all ages and backgrounds with a diverse pallet of experiential, science-based education programs.





What's Good for the Bird is Good for the Herd

In 2021, Montana Audubon made great strides in conserving critical habitat for North American grassland birds, with nearly 92,000 acres now under conservation through the Audubon Conservation Ranching Initiative (ACR) in Montana. The purpose of the ACR is to serve as a catalyst for continental-scale restoration of grassland ecosystems important to birds and people by working with private landowners to incorporate ecological outcomes with ranch management practices. The hope is that we can develop markets for beef raised on “Bird Friendly Land,” supporting state-level organizations in their implementation of ACR and growing product awareness. Audubon’s new partnership with the nation’s largest producer of 100% grass-fed, grass-finished certified organic beef, Panorama Organic, brings us closer to this goal. This collaboration represents the largest market-based regenerative grasslands partnership in the U.S. Audubon-certified, bird-friendly beef could soon be in a grocery store near you!

People, grasslands, and wildlife all benefit from ACR’s stewardship model that prioritizes the long-term health of the land. Hand-in-hand with the certification is the cultivation of

relationships with private producers and rancher networks across the state. This summer, Montana Audubon staff attended ranching conferences, developed workshops with partners to provide educational resources, and met with community stakeholders from Glacier to Broadus to build support for ACR.

And we are building organizational support from within. This fall our ACR program is growing through the hire of a new full-time ACR Manager, Christian Meny, and the continuation of Peter Dudley’s Big Sky Watershed Corps, Conservation Ranching Assistant position. Both positions reflect Montana Audubon’s commitment to restoring grasslands. With a stronger ACR team in place, we are ready to grow the program, improve grasslands for native birds, and build new relationships with partners and private producers.

Audubon-certified, bird-friendly beef could soon be in a grocery store near you!



Audubon Certified Bird-Friendly Seal Gets Bird Friendlier



The Audubon Certified bird friendly seal recognizes lands managed to promote birds and biodiversity. Until now, like a fencepost minus a meadowlark, something was missing.

Now appearing: a grazing cow, blooming coneflower, pollinating butterfly, and singing Western Meadowlark, a foursome that better visually represents the 3.5 million acres now in bird-friendly land management through Audubon Conservation Ranching.



Montana Ranches: Havens for Grassland Birds

As part of the ACR certification, all participating ranches host bird surveys to establish a baseline of bird population data to help us understand how management practices improve bird habitat and species composition. In 2021, our first year of surveys, we spent five days surveying in diverse grassland habitats interspersed with wetlands near Smith Lake Wildlife Production Area, shrubby draws along island mountains in central Montana, and sandstone cliffs north of Billings. We survey using the Integrated Monitoring in Bird Conservation Regions point-count protocol to monitor landbirds, and collect important vegetation data, including on the presence of noxious plant species.

During our preliminary survey season, we had some exciting discoveries! We observed 82 bird species and 26 Montana Species of Concern (SOC), including critical grassland species like the Bobolink, Greater Sage-Grouse, Long-billed Curlew, Upland Sandpiper, Vesper Sparrow, and Lark Bunting. These are all focal species for many groups, as well as the ACR protocol. In Montana, the U.S North American Bird Conservation Initiative (NABCI)



Bob Martinka

*Three out of three ranches
in our survey had Long-
Billed Curlew.*

recognizes three distinct Bird Conservation Regions (BCR): the Northern Rockies, Prairie Potholes, and Badlands and Prairies.

All three regions are represented in land managed by our ranching partners, and we observed species of concern for each region in the handful of first-year surveys. Three out of three ranches had Long-billed Curlew. We also detected wetland SOC species like the Common Loon and Wilson's Phalarope. The occurrence of the grassland species listed above and other SOC (American White Pelican, Great Blue Heron, Bald Eagle, and Red Headed Woodpecker) signal that the program will help conserve not only Montana's threatened grassland species but also many of the 433 species that call the state home.

*Cattle graze in front
of Round Butte at
Alger Ranch*





A Voting Record of Negative Impacts to Wildlife – How We Move Forward

Recalling the 67th Montana Legislative session, a whirlwind of anti-wildlife and anti-environment proposals, is a tough exercise that needs to happen for us to understand how to prioritize next steps and hold decision makers accountable. Since the Legislature left town in April, the majority of our legislative policy work has focused on following the implementation of anti-predator legislation that greatly liberalizes wolf hunting and trapping, commercializes the taking of wolves, moves to reduce the number of wolves in the state, and threatens native wildlife species like the grizzly bear, Canada lynx, and American bison.

Fallout from the passage of House Bills 224 and 225 and Senate Bills 98 and 314 has been our primary focus. HB 224, HB 225, and SB 314 all target wolves, and despite tens of thousands of public comments received by Montana’s Fish & Wildlife Commission this summer, all of the most drastic changes proposed with these bills were adopted by the Commission in August. Changes adopted include allowing night hunting, snaring, trap baiting, extending harvest dates, relaxing the individual harvest limit from five to ten, and eliminating harvest quotas near Yellowstone National Park. These changes are not just going to impact Montana’s wolf population but potentially even our state’s management responsibility towards the species.

With the implementation of regulations like HB 224, 225, and SB 314 underway, the blowback was, not surprisingly, immediate, and now a complex layer of legal activities is at play. Seventy organizations have filed a new federal petition to relist wolves on the Endangered Species Act, and the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service (USFWS)

has announced an intent to review the gray wolf’s conservation status.

Next on the docket and into the new year, we are working with partners to follow and comment on the implementation of regulations that will allow hunting black bears with hounds and fallout from SB 98 that makes it easier for a person to lethally control grizzly bears if they appear to be threatening people or livestock. As we move forward, monthly Fish & Wildlife Commission meetings will become more significant to our public policy efforts, and we expect proposals pertaining to bears to come out over the next few months. The moment is here for us as the public to stand up and keep speaking up on these issues during the public comment periods that will accompany both the Commission’s decision on new bear harvest regulations and the USFWS status review of the gray wolf.

This year, as we have since 1983, we published a voting record of the 67th legislative session to help us wrap our heads around what happened and tackle the next challenges. This record describes how legislators voted on our primary issues during the biennial legislative session and is a tool to help you educate yourself and your legislators. Please take time to view our record online to observe where your legislators stand. Talk to them about any concerns you may have regarding their votes and express your appreciation of any votes you support. And keep the voting record as a tool to use in the future, as these issues are not going away.



View the
voting record of the
67th legislative session
at [mtaudubon.org/
conservation-
policy](http://mtaudubon.org/conservation-policy)



Staff Update: Meet the New Director of Development

Sarah Cahillane spent the last seven years working as the Director of Development for a community resource center in Bloomington, Indiana. Prior to that, Sarah spent six years living in Botswana, Africa – the first two as a Peace Corps volunteer and the last four working for various organizations on economic development projects. She is committed to volunteer work, and has volunteered at a homeless day center in addition to serving on the Monroe County Affordable Housing Commission and on the financial advisory committee at the local HIV/AIDS outreach program. She became excited about birds while

living in Botswana and often spent more time looking at them than she did the elephants that lived around her. This love of birds continued at her home in Indiana, where she filled the yard with pollinators to make it more bird friendly. She has a very cute terrier called Ziggy and loves to hike, run, and bike. She cannot wait to explore the flora and fauna of Montana!



JOIN MERLIN TOURS FOR FABULOUS COSTA RICA

Cold weather is just beginning!
Escape the long Montana winter
with a trip to fabulous Costa Rica.
We'll visit five national parks and
see a dazzling array of birds and
other wildlife.

March 25–April 6, 2022
\$3,600



Call lead guide Steve “Esh” Eshbaugh at
406-570-2428 for more information.

Yellow-throated Toucan

2021 FIELD PROJECTS BY THE NUMBERS



Amy Seaman

Black Swift

BLACK SWIFTS

- 59** Surveys – 30 morning and 29 evening
- 4** New waterfalls surveyed in NW Montana
- 4** New nests found!
- 7** Technicians and four volunteers trained
- 6** Locations surveyed in the Idaho panhandle region, bringing Idaho biologists into our regional and international working groups

GREAT BLUE HERONS

- 24** Locations surveyed across eight of the state's watersheds, working remotely with 19 volunteers
- 180** Active nests and 217 herons recorded by volunteers



Bob Martinka

CHIMNEY SWIFTS

- 1** Training hosted in eastern Montana, working with volunteers in Billings

MADISON AND MISSOURI RIVER IBA

- 300** Point counts conducted along the Madison and Missouri Rivers, in partnership with the University of Montana Bird Ecology LAB
- 44** Automated Recording Units deployed to passively record for Black and Yellow-billed Cuckoos along the Missouri River
- 8** Black-billed Cuckoos detected in person with call-back surveys and points counts conducted for cuckoos at each ARU location

AUDUBON CONSERVATION RANCHING

- 3** Ranches surveyed over six days using the Integrated Monitoring in Bird Conservation Regions protocol
- 82** Bird species counted, including 20 Species of Concern like the Long-billed Curlew, and even wetland dependent species like the Wilson's Phalarope and Common Loon.



Wilson's Phalarope

Bob Martinka

HONORING A LEGEND

— NORM SCHOENTHAL, 1928 – 2021 —

The Montana Audubon Center has changed dramatically since its founding in 2008. Our 54-acre campus, on land owned by Yellowstone River Parks Association and the City of Billings, is teeming with life. From the Hooded Merganser ducklings, which hatched in Will's Marsh this spring, to the abundance of milkweed and other native plants in our gardens and the Ring-billed Gulls diving for fish in our ponds this fall, nature has truly been restored to this former gravel pit.

All of this was created in large part due to the vision of Norm Schoenthal, who passed away on September 29.



Norm's influence is recognized in the names of the Norm Schoenthal Wet Lab at the Montana Audubon Center and Norm's Island adjacent to the Center. He touched the lives of innumerable people at the Center and throughout Billings and will continue to do so, through his vision for the

Center and his tremendous love for the land. Norm was a regular at the Center for many years, saying hello to the preschoolers and chatting with staff while doing his weekly birding surveys via his Gator.

Sarah Chatwood and Heather Bilden, two of our longest-serving employees, who knew him well, wrote beautiful tributes to Norm, and we wanted to honor him in this newsletter.

Norm's legacy will live on in the people who grow roots at the Center and go on to love our planet as he did.



James Woodcock, Billings Gazette

It's hard to process the loss of a man whose vision has had such a profound impact in my life and career. I remember years ago when the classroom I now teach preschool in was Norm's domain. He tended the small plants that now populate the center, his green gator ever present in the garage. We would chat in the mornings about our plans for the day. He seemed especially excited to check out the macro invertebrates we pulled from the ponds with our classes. We would often encounter Norm taking a snooze in his gator along the trail in the afternoons.

As years passed I didn't see Norm as much but his legacy lives on in the imaginations of the kids I teach...

"Mr Norm lives on Norm's island under a stump."

"There goes Mr Norm looking for birds." "Mr Norm

knows how to grow every plant in the world." "Mr Norm made our school."

The preschool classes excitedly waved at him anytime he drove by, with the awe of seeing a superhero. I am grateful every day for Norm's vision in developing and restoring this gravel pit that changes the lives of the people who visit here. His legacy will live on in the people who grow roots here at the Center and go on to love our planet as he did. – Sarah

I am grateful every day for Norm's vision... that changes the lives of the people who visit here.

Norm had a tremendous influence on my early career at the Audubon Conservation Education Center (now the Montana Audubon Center). When I first arrived in Billings, Norm and YRPA's restoration of the Center grounds was well underway and construction of the classroom building had just begun. Norm was a daily presence in my life as I got to know the landscape and began my new job of developing programs for youth in Billings. Norm quickly took me under his wing to teach me much of what I know about the plants, birds and other wildlife along the Yellowstone River.

I remember cruising the trails of Norm's Island in his Gator, and stopping to chat about the wild licorice, the peach-leaf willow, the common goldeneyes, and a wealth of other species that were new to me. He eagerly shared everything he knew and his exuberance was infectious. Frequently we'd be met on the trails by a former student or two that would shake Norm's hand enthusiastically and reminisce about his biology classes at Eastern Montana College (now MSU-Billings). He was already a local legend by the time I met him in 2008.

He had a tremendous impact on so many lives – from youth and adults to plants and animals. We are lucky to have had him as a champion of the Yellowstone ecosystem and of conservation education. The work we do at the MAC would not be possible without Norm's vision and tireless efforts to bring Montana's diverse ecology to the students of Billings. His years of hard work and dedication live on through all these lives at the Center. – Heather

The work we do at the MAC would not be possible without Norm's vision and tireless efforts.



VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT

It's always great to highlight those who contribute to our work. We'd like to introduce and appreciate two of them.

For our first Volunteer Spotlight, meet one of our Junior High volunteers, **Lydia Selvey**. This year marks Lydia's second year as a Summer Camp Volunteer. Originally drawn to the 'Littles' camps (Kindergarten to 2nd grade), this year she had the opportunity to work with the Fledglings summer camp (ages 3–5), where she enjoyed playing, engaging, and reading to the pint-size campers. When asked why she likes volunteering at the Center, Lydia mentioned being outside and working

with the campers. Volunteering over 100 hours this past summer alone, Lydia has been an amazing addition to our volunteer community and an ambassador for all we do at the Center.



Next, we're shining the spotlight on a long-time Center volunteer, **Chuck Ward**. Over the last 11 years, Chuck has helped keep the Center functional in many ways, including building stairs to the loft and teaching the staff to build kiosks.

He also did a lot of seasonal tractor work. Chuck said, "It helped that my wife (Carol Ward) worked at the Center

at the time and knew the skill set I had." In recent years, Chuck also volunteered at local schools to help with reading and math. When asked what he enjoys most about volunteering, he said being able to "put skills to work for the benefit of the community," teaching others new skills, and seeing how his help makes a difference. Chuck has been instrumental in helping the Center be more functional, for which we are forever grateful. When asked what he wants others to know about volunteering, he said, "Don't be afraid to volunteer. People should not think they don't have something to offer." We couldn't agree more!



CALL FOR VEHICLE DONATIONS

Are you looking to upgrade your vehicle this year? Before you trade in or scrap your old one, consider donating it to conservation.

Montana Audubon is looking for vehicle donations to support our science and education programs. Our top priority right now is securing a pickup truck to support restoration and maintenance at the Montana Audubon Center in Billings. If you have a vehicle and are interested in learning more, contact us using the form on our website.

Note: all vehicle donations are tax deductible.



CREATE A CONSERVATION LEGACY

Protecting Birds Today and Beyond

Core to Montana Audubon's vision is that birds, other wildlife and their habitats in Montana will be protected for generations to come. Planned gifts are instrumental in helping our organization achieve this goal and help you leave a lasting conservation legacy. Together we can ensure the long term sustainability of these precious Montana landscapes and wildlife.

Through your estate planning process please consider naming Montana Audubon. Your generous gift will benefit Montana's native birds, other wildlife, and their habitats today and into the future.

For more information about how to add Montana Audubon to your estate planning, please contact Sarah Cahillane at sarah@mtaudubon.org or call the office at 406-443-3949.



MOBILIZE YOUR PASSION FOR BIRDS

Make a meaningful impact for the birds of Montana by choosing the Bird Habitat License plate, which features an American Avocet, Ruddy Duck, Lewis's Woodpecker, and a trio of Black-billed Magpies—on a Rocky Mountain Front backdrop. For an affordable price, you can support Montana Audubon and our bird conservation work while cruising under the big sky.

For more details visit
mtaudubon.org/support/



Board Profile

Jack Kirkley's Decades of Service

Bird conservation has always been en vogue for old-timer and veteran board member, Jack Kirkley. Jack joined Montana Audubon's board in August of 1985, shortly after he began his career as a biology professor at the University of Montana-Western in Dillon. Few board members predate Jack's participation. When Audubon chapter leaders formed a cooperative called the Montana Audubon Council (MAC), Jack supported MAC's move towards opening the Helena office. Recalling coincidences prior to arriving in Dillon, he and early MAC member Cary Lund both had worked as NPS laborers in Yellowstone National Park in the early '70s. Or, as Jack puts it, "Somehow two Yellowstone garbage men ended up supporting a new sophisticated conservation group in Montana."

When it comes to understanding conservation issues, questions, and challenges, Jack has some perspective. He has witnessed many changes in birds and birding, including the recovery of endangered Peregrine Falcons and Bald Eagles, the technological revolution of using DNA to distinguish and census species, new citizen science tools, and the currently mysterious decline in American Kestrels and possibly Northern Goshawks.

One cherished scientific experience was his 2015 observation of a male Great-tailed Grackle feeding the new fledglings of a female Common Grackle in Dillon! At that time, only a handful of previous Great-tailed Grackle sightings existed statewide. Coincidentally, a molecular biologist from Kansas had just completed his dissertation on the genetics of grackle species worldwide, thus enabling him to genetically verify Jack's presumption of this never-before-documented hybridization pairing. In Jack's opinion, that experience illustrates how technological innovations, like DNA analysis, as well as improved GPS tracking



equipment and online resources like McCauley Library, can help promote conservation. But he warns against relying too heavily on technology. In his words, "Birds will always tell us stories, if we keep asking the tough questions. Technology can help us contribute, but some things remain the same. People still need to get out there with their binoculars and make good observations as an important part of on-the-ground studies."

"Birds will always tell us stories, if we keep asking the tough questions."

After over three decades, Jack is content knowing that Montana Audubon is still providing common-sense, science-based solutions to the issues facing our landscape and native wildlife. He is excited that the new Audubon Conservation Ranching program will extend our work to individuals who he views as crucial to bird conservation. He is pleased that we continue to focus on conservation-oriented issues during the biennial legislative session and delighted that we support, educate, and nurture nature appreciation in our future generations.

Jack's prior Board of Directors service, including his 2-year term as Board president, is part of Montana Audubon's history. In 2021, Jack finally retired from his 36-year college teaching career and his Board member duties. We know he will relish the extra time he will have to spend with his wife, children and nine grandchildren or out in the woods searching for his beloved Northern Goshawks. We are indebted to him for his time and service to Montana Audubon.

Star Volunteers

These Montana Audubon volunteers have offered time, expertise, passion, elbow grease, advice, and a sense of humor as they've helped with recent events, projects, programs, and more. Thank you!

Citizen Science Volunteers

Payton Adams
Becka Barkley
Carla Belski
Heather Bilden
Annie Buchwald
Gerard Byrd
Elaine Caton
Sneed Collard
Braden Collard
Roy Curet
Cody Daiutolo
Kristi DuBois
Kayli Durglo
Steve Eliason
Kari Eneas
Carol Fox
Sally Friou
Connie Geiger
Erick Greene
Anne Greene
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Pat Jaquith
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Isabel Baretta
Andrea Berry
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Nikayla Beyers
Alison Blee
Kate Cochran
Jerry Dalton
Sheri Dayton
Pamela DeBartolo
Jeremiah Deveraux
Cassidy Dinkel
Walter E. Hobbs
Claudia Fife
Heather Gaitonde
Ahmilee Guzman
Sophie Hall
Max Haynes
Ashley Heppner

Elvisto Hobbs
Harper Howe
Hank Jagodzinski
Ruth Johnson
Carolyn Jones
Christine Jones (Willis)
Justin Kaldahl
Marian Lyman-Kirst
Robert Mackin
Rebecca Mathias
Steve McConnell
Alex McKibben
Ali Meyer
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Dave Mullen
Mary Mullen
Ryland Nelson
David Omen
Patty Palaoro
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Anna Rogers
Ava Romee
Kateri Rush
Anthony Sammartano
Gwen Satterfield
Ashlee Scherr
Lillie Schlosser
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Lydia Selvey
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Isabelle Southern
John Spencer
Elle Stock
Luke Stock
Brianna Sullivan
Graham Szudera
Joan Trent
Lindsey Trogdon
Daisy Trout
Renee Verbeck
Campbell Walker
Chuck Ward
Shellie Wherley
Patrick Wilson-Scott

Groups

Alternatives Inc.
Big Brothers Big Sisters
Billings Catholic
 Young Adults
Billings Church of Christ
Boy Scouts of America
COR Enterprises
First Interstate Bank
Hugh O'Brien
 Youth Leadership
Kohl's
Leadership Billings
Christ the King
 Lutheran Church
Montana State University
Rimrock Foundation
Skyview Life Skills
West High Life Skills
Youth Alternatives

Wildlife Grants Available

Montana Audubon will once again make available small grants from the Audubon Wildlife Fund of Montana, a permanent endowment. The application deadline for the 2022 grant cycle is December 17, 2021. For information and a grant application, visit: mtaudubon.org/about/wildlifegrants/



Projects funded through this program in 2021 included supporting the Yellowstone Wildlife Sanctuary Wingspan mural, the Jewel Basin Hawkwatch, The Montana Moth Project, and Farm to School of Park County Native Pollinator Habitats.

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