


Montana Audubon continues to be a leader in using citizen science to advance conservation in Montana. By leveraging funds from entities like the Glacier National Park Conservancy, the Sargent Endowment, LEAW Family Foundation, the Cadeau Foundation, and generous donors, we have built durable conservation partnerships centered on a dynamic and growing volunteer network. Specifically, in fiscal year 2021-2022 we leveraged support to:

-  Increase Black Swift research across western states and Canada, training 3 Wildlife Biologists in Idaho and 3 in Glacier National Park.
-  Survey Black Swift nesting colonies at 28 waterfalls during 26 mornings; across western Montana and into northern Idaho. 40 waterfalls were assessed for habitat characteristics. Just 4 surveys took place at previously surveyed waterfalls, and by using our improved 2022 survey technique, ¾ of these new sites (a total of 9) were found to be occupied!
-  Compile 3 years of Black Swift survey data to statistically compare survey success between morning and evening periods. Work included proofing Montana’s entire historical record of Black Swift data back to 1964, reviewing data collection assumptions, and creating a waterfall location database with GNP biologists.
-  Continue leading citizen monitoring projects for state species of concern, like the Great Blue Heron and Long-billed Curlew, and both Gray-crowned and Black Rosy Finches. Curlew surveys ran in the Helena, Flathead, and Blackfoot Valleys. We began working with 14 volunteers on Sageland Collaborative’s Rosy-Finch Project. And we even hosted three Chimney Swift training events in Billings, Havre, and Lewistown.
-  Continue collaborating with Audubon Conservation Ranching partners statewide to develop unique Habitat Management Plans and conduct bird and vegetation monitoring. Work included strengthening our partnership with Piikani Lodge Health Institute, along the Rocky Mountain Front, work to deliver technical workshops (Ranching For Profit), and work towards restoring sections of Truman Creek (near Kila, MT).
-  Collaborate with Flathead Audubon Society to permanently conserve ~450 acres of wetland and riparian areas in northwestern Montana; a project now entering its public comment and outreach phase that will be finalized in 2024.



One ranch near Kila, has had 2 very wet years in a row, leading to the presence of special birds like Wilson’s Phalarope.



We found 132 species of birds, including 12 of 17 priority species, across 110,000 ACR certified acres.



Ranches involved in ACR support a diversity of grassland types. The ACR “seal” conveys good stewardship and empowers consumers to support conservation-minded ranchers.



Surveyors watch over a lake for the cold morning emergence of Black Swifts from their nesting waterfalls.