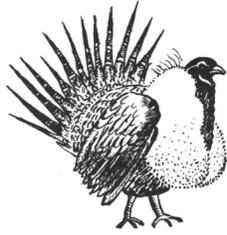


PLAINS & PEAKS



MURIE AUDUBON

Casper Wyoming - Monthly Publication
<http://www.murieaudubon.org>

Calendar

- May 7—Bird ID Class—EKW Migrants—7PM at ACGC
- May 8—Gen. Mtg.—7PM—OGCC Bldg. at 2211 King Blvd.
- May 9—Class Field trip to EKW
- May 16—CHPAS Big Day
- May 22—Bart Rea Birdathon
- May 30—Field Trip—TBA—Contact June Calmes (237-9402)
- More dates of interest on pg. 7
- Aug. 24—September newsletter article deadline
- Every Thursday—Brown Bag Lunch with the birds—ACGC—12 Noon

THE TETON SCIENCE SCHOOL EXPERIENCE



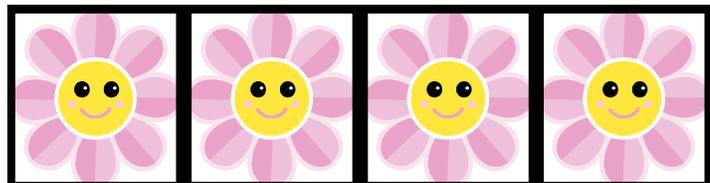
The Teton Science Schools have been teaching about the natural world and the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem since 1967. The organization has educated, trained and inspired thousands of children, youth and adults, bringing them together through the study of nature and its extension, place-based education. A variety of programs serve students across Wyoming and across the nation. Three to seven day programs are offered for students onsite throughout the year in the greater Yellowstone ecosystem.

Star Lane Center students from Casper participated in one of these programs in January. Several students who attended this program will present their impressions in a power point program at the May monthly meeting. Murie Audubon help supported this trip through scholarship.

The program will be on Friday, May 8, 2009 at 7 pm at the Oil & Gas Conservation Commission Building at 2211 King Blvd. The program is free and open to the public!

PROGRAM CHAIR - BRUCE WALGREN

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PRESIDENTIAL PONDERINGS



Publication of the May edition of *Plains & Peaks* together with our May General Meeting, bird classes and associated field trips may mark the informal conclusion of the Murie Audubon year, but not the end of activities. Planned for late Spring and Summer are a variety of exciting field trips and educational events highlighted in this newsletter. Make sure you jot down the information.

On another note, the end of June marks the end of my year as President. I'm continually amazed at the volunteer effort and dedication that go into making the Murie Audubon Society a vibrant organization that reaches out to its members and public at large, fostering knowledge and appreciation of Wyoming's wonderful natural world.

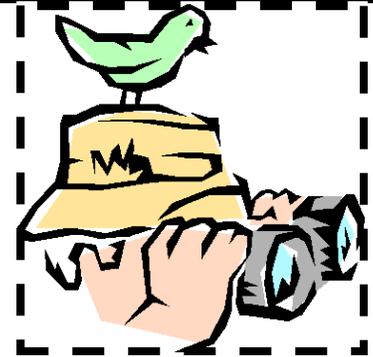
Singling out folks for thanks bears the risk of overlooking someone, whom I hope will accept my apologies for geriatric oversight. First and foremost, Chris Michelson is retiring from the office of treasurer. He has managed deposits and disbursements earmarked for multiple categories capably and efficiently for the past six years. Can we call this

a sabbatical? Bruce and Donna Walgren, as always, juggle a variety of tasks including but not limited to organizing the birdseed sales, lining up speakers, dispensing information at general meetings, administering favorite backyard birds (the list, not the birds), chairing the Eagle Fund Dispersal committee, serving on the Murie Board, coming up with conservation ideas, taking notes on short notice, etc. What a team! Rose-Mary King puts together and edits the Newsletter and website, and for as long as I can remember has organized the Annual Banquet, not to mention planning this year's bird ID classes. I can't imagine the world of Murie without her! Thanks to Jan Whitney for negotiating the mysteries of bulk mail and maintaining membership records, not easy tasks. Laurie Fletcher, whom I'm convinced is cloned (how can one person do all that she does) records our meeting minutes and in her "spare time" is writing a grant application for TogetherGreen. As education chair, Ann Hines has over the years brought nature to hundreds if not thousands of children through the Audubon Adventures Program she administers. June Calmes works diligently to grow the Murie Audubon Society by developing ideas to attract new members. Betty Krause is our quartermaster, ensuring availability of tasty treats at our general meetings. The enthusiasm and knowledge of Stacey Scott puts us where the birds are through the field trips he organizes. The counsel of emeritus Bart Rea has been invaluable, as has been the sage

advice of Bob Yonts. And three cheers to everyone serving on the board, to all our volunteers, and to Audubon Wyoming for making the Audubon Center at Garden Greek available for our board and committee meetings, newsletter folding and Bird ID classes!

PRESIDENT – JIM BROWN

BIRD NOTES



We have experienced several snow storms since my last writing, but it finally appears to be warming up and heading towards spring. And migrants are starting to show up!! Flocks of bluebirds are being seen, Say's Phoebes and Mourning Doves are back, Turkey Vultures, Ospreys, and Swainson's Hawks are being reported, and Common Loons were seen and heard at Alcova. Watch for warblers! Spring migration – the season birders look forward to!!!

March yard birds – For the month of March, Wayne and I received 194 yard bird selections from 16 states plus the Yukon and Egypt, with 71 different species reported. Still lots of crossbills, robins, rap-

tors, and woodpeckers being reported, but now meadowlarks and towhees are being added, as well as other harbingers of spring. The most reported species was again Red Crossbill. Western Meadowlark and American Robin tied for second place. In third place was Spotted Towhee.; with American Goldfinch coming in fourth.

Casper: Chris Michelson – Red-breasted Nuthatch, Bridgid Herold – Northern Flicker, Sandy/Miguel Leotta – Steller's Jay, Pineview School – Blue Jay, Rose-Mary King – Steller's Jay, Casper College Greenhouse – Mountain Bluebird, Bruce Walgren – Chukar, Donna Walgren – American Robin;
Cheyenne: Barb Gorges – Mountain Chickadee; **Du-bois:** Anna Moscicki – Dark-eyed Junco; **Douglas:** Billie Snell – Cassin's Finch;
Evansville: Donna Walgren – Killdeer; **Evanston:** Patti/Tim Gorman – Red Crossbill;
Lovell: Glen Olsen – Sandhill Crane; **Mills:** Bruce Walgren – Black-capped Chickadee; **Riverton:** Suzanne Hargis – Northern Goshawk, Bob Hargis – Hairy Woodpecker. Jim Herold is still in **San Diego, CA**, his yard bird was a Townsend's Warbler; and the Lawrences are seeing orioles in **Sonoita, AZ:** Gloria – Hooded Oriole, Jim – Scott's Oriole.

Thanks to all who helped with the Yard Bird Project in March!! Send your bird notes and yard bird reports to Donna Walgren,

4311 S. Center St., Casper, WY 82601, or email to Pi-ranga@bresnan.net, or phone 234-7455. Good Birding!!!

DONNA WALGREN

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

April 16, 2009

Letter to editor; Audubon Society

Dear Editor:

In answer to Stacey Scott's letter last month which seems to downplay the cost of livestock production and contrasting farm practices for grass fed beef and environmentally unfriendly corn.

Stacey is right that there are a lot of costs with meat production and I would like to enumerate a few—especially those that are causing much of the pollution in the water and air. Clear cutting down the forests, especially in the Amazon for grazing—the breathing center of the universe. Remember the part of trees—they absorb the carbon dioxide and give out oxygen. We are decimating our forests at an alarming pace. Forty million acres a year are lost or 100,000 acres every single day. Burning fossil fuels is the number-one source of the increase in carbon dioxide levels worldwide.

The animal products industry uses more water than all other industries combined. That is because the process of getting meat to your table is horribly inefficient and wasteful.

Practically all the food that

is grown is fed to livestock--- even the soybeans- corn and grains are raised to feed cattle. A small percentage of the acreage is used to grow food for people!

People that eat "dead meat" get the chance to absorb the chemicals, antibiotics, pesticides as well as to have a high percentage rate of developing heart disease and the toxicity that many other diseases from the flesh that ferments in the intestine!

Livestock production sickens the environment from the toxic runoff from factory farms and meat processing plants that poison valuable water resources and is leaving some areas of the country unfit for human habitation. The poisoned water also poisons the birds.

I have many more thoughts about how the animal industry has made folks to die for meat. Call me for documentation.

OLETA THOMAS, a dedicated still active senior citizen vegan!

Casper, WY. 237-9676

Dear Editor:

We have many unsung heroes in our chapter. I would like to personally thank:

Betty Crouse for her MANY years of obtaining people to bring the wonderful refreshments for the monthly meetings.

Bruce and Donna Walgren for all the behind the

scenes work that they do, not to mention getting the monthly programs and preparing the drinks for the meetings.

And last, but not least, Laurie Fletcher for her expertise and computer knowledge that she has contributed since becoming a member, plus giving her time as secretary of the board.

ANN HINES

GLOBAL WARMING IMPACTS ON PIKAS

Pikas are small relatives of rabbits and hares found in North America and Eurasia. Living in rock piles near the tops of mountains and adapted for very cold temperatures, these little animals do not do well in temperatures as high as 50°F. They don't hibernate, living on harvested grass, stems and flowers stored in "hay piles." A mature pika weighs less than half a pound and has been described as "a small potato with Mickey Mouse ears."

An article in *Sierra Magazine* noted that biologists studying sites in the Great Basin region of western North America where scientific archives indicated that pikas lived in the early 1900s, found no pikas in a third of these sites. It was also determined that the average tem-

peratures of these uninhabited areas are considerably warmer when compared with the sites where pikas are still being found. Researchers also found that these little animals seem to be generally moving upslope – in Yosemite, hundreds of feet upslope over the past 100 years. It is not believed that pikas will die out in the immediate future, but the long-term prognosis does look bleak.

DONNA WALGREN



NEW MEMBERS AND FRIENDS.

We welcome new members from Rawlins: Robert Beck, from Casper: Karel Tierney, Crocker Hollis, Thomas Rea, Ronald Dutton, Jeff and Mary McDonald, Dennis Bienvenu, James Fenner, and Margie Irons; from Douglas: Tschacher and Douglass Schaffner; from Evansville: Devona Muller; from Jackson Kevin Caughlan and Phillip De-

laney; and from Teton Village: Natalie Goss

Renewing members from Casper: Fred Eiserman, Fred Dawson, James De-groot and James Brown; from Yellowstone National Park: Matt Johnson; from Wilson: Patricia Reilly and Elizabeth and Andrew King; and from Jackson: Alice Eve Richter.

Renewing Friends of Murie from Casper: Lorraine Reed, and Arleen Carr and from Alcova Jean Dawson.

Friend of Murie Members may notice the word "EXPIRED" in red ink on their label if your \$10 per year subscription has lapsed. If you have made a payment and we missed it, please contact Bruce or Jan.

We welcome you all and encourage you to participate in any of our activities. Feel free to contact any Officer or Board Member should you have any questions or suggestions.

**BRUCE WALGREN AND JAN
WHITNEY**

INVASIVE PLANTS AND BIRDS

I was reading an article in a back issue of *North American Birds* (The Winter Season, 2007) discussing possible reasons for changes in winter bird distributions. Considering some of the causes of birds over-wintering increasingly farther north, the authors (Marshall Iliff and

Derek Lovitch) noted the milder winters and general global climate change that may be responsible for southern species becoming more common in New England, as well as northern species becoming less common. One example: several years ago Northern Mockingbirds were exciting finds for New England birders; now this species is seen quite frequently.

Data from Christmas Bird Counts, Breeding Bird Surveys, Project Feeder-Watch, eBird, along with sightings reported in *North American Birds* has indicated northward (and westward and even upslope) expansion of some species' ranges. Global warming always comes immediately to mind when considering this data, but researchers agree that other factors are also involved. An article by E. S. Brinkley (2006) mentions habitat modification, stochastic weather events, breeding success/failure, mis-oriented migrants, and also observer effort. Another factor to be considered is the proliferation of non-native and invasive plants, especially those that produce large quantities of fruit eaten by birds. Iliff and Lovitch discuss the impact in New England by such plants – multiflora rose (*Rosa multiflora*), oriental bittersweet (*Celastrus orbiculatus*), and various species of honeysuckle (*Lonicera* spp.) to name a few. These plants provide an abundant supply of forage when native foods

are less readily available. Many grow in disturbed areas and “green belts.” Plus, seed dispersal by the frugivorous birds feeding on the fruits helps spread and increase these plants. Referring back to the mockingbirds in New England, these birds have moved northward with the multiflora rose plantings.

Two questions are posed by Iliff and Lovitch; the first – Are invasive plants good for birding? The green belt areas many times serve as magnets for birds (from common migrants to rare vagrants), where birds gather to eat whatever is available. And more often than not, these areas contain non-native, invasive plants. It was noted that in eastern Massachusetts, a highly urbanized environment, packed with people and traffic, there are many good birding

opportunities in these green spaces. Another example: Bohemian Waxwings have been noted wintering in good numbers in Anchorage, Alaska, thanks to plantings of non-native fruiting species for landscaping. Also, some of these plantings of non-natives have also provided habitat for non-native birds (additional interesting “finds” for birders). So it does seem that invasive plants could be considered good for birding in some locations.

The second question (probably the more important one) is: Are invasive plants good for birds? This is much more difficult to assess. Studies indicate that multiflora rose has been a positive factor in the case of the Northern Mockingbird expanding its range northward, and the rose fruit is a nutritious food for the mockingbird. However, some chemical compounds in the rose fruit may make these fruits unpalatable to other bird species. Species have evolved with their forage foods and some can be very specific in their nutritional requirements (specialists); whereas others will utilize a variety of foods (generalists). Much of the research on fruit preferences and nutrition quality has been done on American Robins and Cedar Waxwings (both of these species tend to be generalists). The waxwings seem to like small, red berries; and most honeysuckle species, which have small, red berries, are abundant.



Encrusted Propeller



Quagga

Bush honeysuckle berries contain a carotenoid (rhodoxanthin) which has been shown to be the cause of the aberrant orange color being seen at times in the tail tips of Cedar Waxwings, usually in juvenal plumages. Rhodoxanthin is also implicated in the aberrant plumages in Baltimore Orioles, Yellow-breasted Chats, Kentucky Warblers, and White-throated Sparrows in which yellow pigmented feathers have changed to orange. The potential evolutionary impacts of such changes on mate selection, physical fitness, or other attributes are unknown. Also, many frugivores have specific digestive and physiological adaptations that allow them to process certain fruits more efficiently than others.

Some positive value can also be attributed to the invasive common reed or phragmites (*Phragmites australis*), which outcompetes native wetland environments. Kane (2000) notes that in New Jersey, phragmites wetlands provide habitat for dozens of species for nesting, wintering, and migration stopovers. And in Virginia, before they were destroyed by state agencies, large stands of phragmites hosted enormous roosts of Bobolinks, along with Eastern Kingbirds and Tree Swallows. Even the much-maligned purple loosestrife has its upside – it feeds Ruby-throated Hummingbirds and later in the fall, migrant sparrows.

The success of invasive plants is often to a lack of natural enemies, especially insects. For example, about 120 species of insects feed on Purple Loosestrife in Europe, but only 12 species were found in a Manitoba study. Insects are a vital part of the most birds' diets; even frugivorous birds consume insect matter during nesting season.

Considering all this, the value of invasive plants to birds is debatable, but most would probably agree that the negative impacts greatly outweigh the positives. Invasives are part of our environment and must be dealt with. I would very much like to hear from anyone who has more thoughts and information on this topic.

DONNA WALGREN

AUDUBON NEWSWIRE

**Volume 7, Number 4 - Tuesday,
April 21, 2009**

WATCH DISNEY NATURE'S EARTH

This one year odyssey in the lives of polar bears, African elephants, and humpback whales is now showing in Casper's Iris Stadium.

GOOGLE EARTH PROJECT INFORMS ENERGY PLANNING BY HIGHLIGHTING CRITICAL SAGE GROUSE HABITAT

Audubon and the Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC) partnered with Google

Earth to map wildlife zones in six states considered prime for wind turbines and transmission structures. The pilot program launched April 1 allows policymakers, developers and the general public to explore western states. Maps researched by Kevin Doherty, Senior Ecologist for Audubon Wyoming, indicate clusters of density among Sage Grouse, already imperiled by habitat loss. Users can also explore Audubon's Important Bird Areas. "We want to build on this pilot to establish common ground and spread green energy opportunities across America," John Flicker emphasized; "What we've really mapped is a better way to work together to let the wind fuel a healthier future for people and wildlife." More at www.audubon.org/sagebrush.html

**JOIN THE AUDUBON COFFEE
CLUB AND HAVE A TREE
PLANTED IN YOUR NAME!**

Starting this Earth Day, for the next hundred years (until Earth Day 2109) when you sign up for the Audubon Coffee Club, our licensee the Rogers Family Company, will plant a native rainforest tree on their organic coffee farm in Central America. AudubonT Premium Shade-Grown Organic Coffee is certified by the Rainforest Alliance and 100% organic by the OCIA. These standards ensure that coffee farms are managed to conserve and

protect birds and other wildlife, habitat, ecosystem functions, streams, springs and soils. Sign up at <http://www.auduboncoffeeclub.com/pages.php?pageid=12>

See also the new website for Audubon coffee at www.auduboncoffeeclub.com. It has cool features such as loyalty points, a roast meter, and a "recaffeinate" button to help you easily re-order.

BIRDS & BIRDING

Help Protect Birds of Prey From the Dangers of Methane Gas Burners.

Landfills provide a wonderful source of prey for raptors. These birds perch on top of methane gas burner stacks in order to survey the treeless landscape before them. What they do not know is that intermittently the burner will ignite. Most of these birds will suffer and then finally succumb to their injuries. Read more about the issue and sign petition at http://www.huntingtonaudubon.org/national_news.asp



UP COMING EVENTS

- **7 May—Bird ID Class—**Migratory Birds of Edness Kimball Wilkins (EKW) State Park
- **9 May—Bird ID Class Field Trip—**EKW
- **16 May—Cheyenne High Plains Big Day—**Contact—Greg Johnson, 634-1056
- **22 May—Bart Rea Birdathon—**benefitting AW.
- **30 May—Field Trip TBA—**Contact June Calmes (237-9402)
- **4-8 June—Audubon Wyoming Red Desert Trip—**Contact Lynn Jones—307-745-4848
- **5-7 June—Wings Over Carbon County Birding Festival—**Contact Frances or Janice Bergquist—(307) 326-8073
- **13 June—ACGC Birding—**Contact June Calmes (237-9402)
- **20-21 June—Audubon Wyoming Bioblitz in Shirley Basin** (article in last month's *Plains and Peaks* or visit our website)
- **11 July—Birds, Flowers & Butterflies** (Muddy Mountain)
- **25 July—Bat Festival—**Fort Laramie Historic District
- **1 August—Audubon Wyoming Bird Banding at ACGC.** Banding festival.
- **4 August (tentative)—Murie Audubon Society Family Picnic—**Edness Kimball Wilkins State Park
- **29 August—Bird ID Class—**

Raptors and Passerines @ EKW

- **Laramie Banding Station Dates:** June 5, 12, 26 – July 1,10,24
- **Casper Garden Creek Station Banding dates:** June 9, 16, 23 – July 7, 14, 21 – August 1 (Banding Festival) - Contact Jess Ryan—307-473-1987
- **Keyhole State Park Banding:** June 4, 11, 25 – July 9, 18, 23, 30 (Contact Dusty or Jacelyn Downey—504-453-4139, 504-453-4124

BLACK-CAPPED CHICKADEE ALARM CALLS

One of the enjoyments of birding is listening to (and learning!!) birds' songs and calls. Birds are probably the most vocal of all animals, and their vocalizations are generally divided into two broad categories; the above-mentioned songs and calls. Christopher Leahy (*The Bird-watcher's Companion*) generally defines song as "a series of different notes uttered in a cohesive sequence so that they form a characteristic phrase with a recognizable rhythm." It is generally agreed that the purpose of song is to communicate the singer's territorial boundaries to both rivals and to potential mates (obviously from the male's perspective!). Leahy



does admit that some songs, such as the short “chebec” of the Least Flycatcher, don’t really fit this description of singing. But the function of the “chebec” vocalization still communicates the territorial and/or mate attraction (here I am!!) message.

Calls, on the other hand, are typically brief; their function is to convey information in specific ecological circumstances. Examples of such situations include alarm calls to signal danger, contact calls to locate other individuals of the species, and flight calls to keep the flock together (as noted by Elphick, Dunning, and Cech in their section on Communication in *The Sibley Guide to Bird Life & Behavior*).

Consider the “chick-a-dee-dee-dee” call of the Black-capped Chickadee. This is an expression of alarm given by the bird. Studies by Chris Templeton of the University of Washington in Seattle found that the chickadee’s alarm calls signaled not only the presence of a predator, but also the relative danger. It was determined that it was the “dee” note that conveyed the degree of danger; the more “dees” in the “chick-a-dee-

dee”, the greater the danger. For instance, a Great Gray Owl only prompted an extra “dee” on average, but a pygmy owl, a small, maneuverable predator much more likely to catch a chickadee, elicited at least 3 or 4 extra “dees” and sometimes as many as 20.

More familiar alarm calls in other birds are – the raucous “jaay” call of the Blue Jay, the rattle-like “churr” call of the House Wren, and the short, shrill “teek” call of the American Robin. As Templeton noted, “It’s surprising and really exciting to know that there is such sophisticated information being passed along in the calls you can hear almost every day.”

If you are interested in delving more deeply into bird behavior, other references to look at include *The Singing Life of Birds* by Donald Kroodsma and the 3-volume set *A Guide to the Behavior of Common Birds* by Donald and Lillian Stokes.

DONNA WALGREN

SLATE OF OFFICERS FOR 2009-10

The slate of officers for the 2009-10 fiscal year are:

PRESIDENT: Jim Brown
VICE PRESIDENT: Harry Martin
SECRETARY: Laurie Fletcher
TREASURER: Stacey Scott

The election will be at the May 8th General Meeting. Nominations from the floor will be accepted at this time.

Many Thanks to the above 4 for their willingness to serve!



NEWSLETTER FOLDERS



Many, many thanks to all of you who have helped fold the newsletter each month. We have an hour or so of catching up on who has seen what bird and where and it seems in no time the newsletter is done. Folding 450-500 copies, sometimes 3 pages in each issue, in an hour is no small feat! That’s because you are all so efficient and get the job done! I would thank you all by name, but I would surely leave someone out! How-

ever, if I don't mention Dick Von Holdt, he will probably pout! So, thanks Dick, the folding went a lot better when you were there!

If you would like to participate, give me a call—577-0568

ROSE-MARY KING—EDITOR

BOARD SPLINTERS

Items of interest from the April 7th Board of Directors Meeting.

- ♦ **Treasurer's Report—Chris Michelson—** Balances are as follows: Checking = \$4,981.61; savings = \$17,299.24 (\$1,882.23 Eagle Fund, Murie \$15,417.01); Post Office = \$137.60; Undeposited funds (all Updike memorial) \$325.00.
- ♦ **Audubon Wyoming – Jessica Ryan—** Large number of classes; Volunteer training; Fully booked for school students – three groups/day; Shirley Basin Bioblitz in June; Steamboat Lake Survey; JP and Brenda will help; Larry Keffer is organizing; Star Lane Academy is using ACGC as a “problem” and will present results at Star Lane on 20 May at 9:45 am and 1:45 pm;

UP-COMING FESTIVALS

May 14-17: Ute Mountain Mesa Verde Birding Festival: Keynote Speaker is Bill

Schmoker, Bird Photographer and President of Colorado Field Ornithology (CFO. Visit us [online](#) for more information.

14-18: Great Salt Lake Bird Festival: Come celebrate spring migration at the 11th Annual Great Salt Lake Bird Festival May 14-18, 2009 in Farmington, Utah! This festival offers guided field trips to the best birding hot-spots in northern Utah and around the world famous Great Salt Lake. All trips have expert guides. Friday and Saturday programs at the Davis County Event Center include workshops, artists, booths, vendors, and food for people of all ages and birding experience. The annual Dutch oven dinner on Saturday features keynote author and naturalist Scott Weidensaul. See the entire program at: www.greatsaltlakebirdfest.com or call 801-451-3286.

June 5-7: Wings Across the Big Sky: Montana Audubon's annual Festival will feature speakers Vince Yannone & David Sibley. Birding field trips to peaks & prairies available for all ages/abilities. Among species of note: McCown's & Chestnut-collared Longspurs, Sprague's Pipit, Burrowing Owl, Calliope Hummingbirds. Pre & post trips: a Missouri River float trip; Glacier National Park birding tour.

USDA ABANDONS PLAN TO PUT HABITAT INTO PRODUCTION

A plan being considered by the United States Department of Agriculture to open up millions of acres

of private land into agricultural production was abandoned in a July 2008 decision. The Conservation Reserve Program, or CRP, has been a vital resource for farmers, wildlife, consumers, and American taxpayers for over twenty years. Under the program, farmers receive payments for planting trees and grasses, or restoring wetlands, on land that would otherwise be under cultivation. Currently more than 36 million acres are enrolled in the program. The USDA proposal would have allowed farmers to leave the program if they chose to put the land into production.

Audubon has advocated in favor of the program for years. Benefits from the CRP have been widespread. The new wetlands and grasslands have greatly improved soil and water quality and provided habitat for many species. Ninety bird species have been observed using CRP land. Six species on Audubon's WatchList use CRP land for breeding, including one species, Henslow's Sparrow, which is severely imperiled. Many common bird species facing rapid declines also rely on CRP land.

CRP land also sequesters carbon dioxide, the leading cause of global warming. The land holds million tons of carbon dioxide, the equivalent to taking millions of cars off the road. It also saves millions of pounds of sediment and nutrient erosion. (From NAS website)