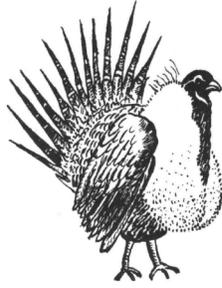


# PLAINS & PEAKS



Vol. 43 - Iss. 6

SEPTEMBER 2009

## MURIE AUDUBON

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

### Calendar

- **September 10**—Raptor ID Class (see this page)
- **September 11**—Membership Mtg. (see this page)
- **September 12**—Raptor ID Field Trip (see this page)
- **September 10-12**—(see page 3)

### BIRD MIGRATION

**A** *mazing Feats of Endurance and Navigation and the Challenge of Global Conservation* will be discussed at the monthly meeting of Murie Audubon Society. With the advent of fall, many species of birds are winging their way towards their winter homes. Some bird species may only migrate to a lower elevation, while others fly thousands of miles non-stop to spend their winter in warmer climes.

Scott Burt, Ph.D., Visiting Associate Professor of Biology at UW/CC will be our guest speaker for our first program of the fall season. Scott has a B.S. and M.S. in Biology from Angelo State and his PhD from the University of New Mexico. While his training is specialized in mammals, he has had a long history in the biology of birds and often plans vacations to include birding.

The program will be on Friday, September 11, 2009 at 7 pm at the Oil & Gas Conservation Commission Building at 2211 King Blvd. As always, the program is free and open to the public!

**Program Chair – BRUCE WALGREN**



### RAPTOR ID CLASS

**Class**—September 10, 7:00, ACGC, 101 Garden Creek Rd.

**Instructors**—Jim & Gloria Lawrence

**Field Trip**—September 12th—Location, & meeting time to be decided Thursday night at the class. \$5.00 for class. No cost for Field Trip. Please call 473-1987 for registration and Field Trip information.



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## PRESIDENTIAL PONDERINGS



I hope everyone enjoyed the summer of her/his choice. I suspect the robins did, judging by the appearance of three groups of fledglings in my backyard over a period of three months. My rabbits were likewise prolific. Perhaps our cool wet summer fostered romance!

Aside from the early migrants, a sure sign that autumn approaches is the yearly mid-August request from National Audubon for an Annual Chapter Report. Although the Murie Audubon Society received its charter from National Audubon in 1971, its roots go back as far as 1949 when the first Casper Christmas Bird Count was conducted. Our predecessor was the Wyoming Chapter of the National Audubon Society, formed in 1954 under the guidance of Dr. Oliver Scott. At the recommendation of Bart Rea, the chapter was re-named after the Murie family in 1970 to avoid geographical confusion in the event that other chapters were started in Wyoming. The 2008-2009 Chapter Report filed last month highlights a 50-plus year's tradition of measuring up to the Mission Statement appearing in every edition of "Plains & Peaks." During the reporting period, Murie Board members and committee chairs collectively volunteered 1400 hours to conservation, education and enhancement of natural habitats, with members and friends significantly swelling this total. Volunteer activities in-

cluded, but certainly were not limited to, working on the newsletter, transporting injured birds to the vet, leading field trips (the Chapter conducted nine), organizing and teaching bird classes, keeping feeders filled, guiding school birding groups, helping with a grant application, attending meetings, administering the Audubon Adventures school programs (approximately 70 kits distributed), bird banding, compiling bird surveys, enhancing habitat at the Audubon Center on Garden Creek, managing the chapter's finances, planning the Annual Banquet, providing refreshments for monthly Friday general meetings, creating publicity, working with the media, recruiting new members, and the list goes on. Additionally, our chapter provided two \$500 scholarships to help school classes attend nature camps. It was a good year, and I look forward to great achievements in 2009-2010. As always, we need your help!

**President – JIM BROWN**

## AUDUBON ADVENTURES

It's Audubon Adventures time again. I have over fifty classrooms enrolled and am in the process of contacting those from last year that I did not hear from in the spring. The subjects this year are:

- Feats of Nature (Stink, Bite, Hide, Fight, How Animals Defend Themselves)
- On the Go! Animals that Migrate
- Plants Rule!
- Critter Construction (How, What and Why Animals Build)

Greg Lance was the first person to sponsor a classroom this year and is a first time sponsor. Thanks, Greg, for getting us

off, to what we hope will be a good season.

**Education Chair – ANN HINES**

## AUDUBON CENTER AT GARDEN CREEK DIRECTOR

Catching grasshoppers and lightening bugs, hearing the crickets and birds were part of everyday life for me in my Eastern Pennsylvania childhood home. But when I went away for the first time to summer camp with kids from New York City and Philadelphia and they were scared of those things, a seed was planted. Finding Prescott College in Arizona nurtured that seed into a degree in Environmental Education/Natural History. Sharing nature with others became my passion and my life's work, which have included classroom teacher in alternative schools, Park Ranger for the National Park Service, in Prescott and Flagstaff, Arizona, Freelance Environmental Educator, Naturalist, and Residential Outdoor School Program Coordinator in Washington State, Site Supervisor for Northwest Regional Outdoor Science School on the Oregon Coast, and Trip Leader for an Eco Tour Company in the Northwest. The best job of all though is being mom to two wonderful daughters, Krista, 24 who is living and studying in London, and Kelly age 22, who is attending Whitworth University in Spokane, WA.

I invite and encourage you to visit or revisit the Audubon Center at Garden Creek, where there's always birds at

the bird feeders and (and a few squirrels, raccoons and deer as well). I look forward to meeting you!

**WANDA PETERS**

## ACGC HAPPENINGS

I am thrilled to be here in Casper, and working at the Audubon Center at Garden Creek. I must salute all who have worked to make the Center what it is today. I feel honored and privileged to build on the groundwork that has been laid.

The summer was a busy one, with many groups and visitors and bird banding keeping both Larry Keffer and myself on our toes. Eagle Scout Dominique Bell put in a bridge on the upper trail, another scout will soon start work on the trail entrance.

Outdoor Wyoming Game & Fish Expo is Sept 10, 11, 12 The display will have interactive ID activities, as well as membership information. We welcome any and all help from set up on Wednesday afternoon or evening, to staffing the booth during the day to taking down on Saturday. Just call the center or let Larry or myself know what times work for you.

Audubon was represented at the Back to School Bash in downtown Casper. Despite the rain and storms, we talked to more than 200 people and introduced young ones (and their parents) to some of the birds of the area with a matching activity.

A big thank you to Larry Keffer, Chris Michelson, Ann Hines, Nyrma and Carmen Sofel, and especially Kathie Privik

who helped take down the display amidst thunder, lightening and rain. You were all lifesavers!

**WANDA PETERS**

## AQUATIC INVASIVE SPECIES THREATEN WYOMING'S WATERS

There are new threats to our aquatic ecosystems here in Wyoming. These threats are in the form of aquatic invasive species that could soon find their way into Wyoming's waters.

Aquatic invasive species are non-native organisms that are introduced into waters through various means. Many of these species are harmful to the natural resources in the ecosystem, and they also threaten human uses of these resources. They can attach to boats and clothing used in the water, and can be transferred from one body of water to another. Collectively, aquatic invasive species can have tremendous detrimental impact on many of the things we value here in Wyoming, including healthy ecosystems, recreational equipment, and secure drinking water supplies. Dealing with invasive species in the United States costs more than \$100 billion each year.

The Wyoming Game and Fish Department is focusing its attention on two particular aquatic invasive species – zebra mussels and quagga mussels. There are no known populations of these mussels in Wyoming to date, but

they have invaded waters across the country and are now present in three of our neighboring states. Heavy infestations can alter aquatic environments by reducing food sources for fish. Mussels remove significant amounts of phytoplankton from the water, which in turn are food for larval and juvenile fish, which are in turn food for sport and commercial fisheries. The mussels can also reduce oxygen levels in the water, further stressing or killing fish.



Mussels can also clog water intakes on motors and attach themselves to props, ruining boat engines. They can increase the operating costs of drinking water plants, power plants, dam maintenance and industrial processes.

The best way you can help prevent the spread of

aquatic invasive species is to make sure you aren't moving these organisms from one body of water to another. Overland transport on



boats, motors, trailers, and other

watercraft poses the greatest risk for spreading these species, so it is important to properly



care for your equipment.

Before leaving the area of a body of water, but while on dry land, do the following: 1) Drain every conceivable space that can hold water, including engines, live wells or ballast tanks or even just the inside of your canoe, kayak, or raft; 2) Clean any and all equipment by removing plants, mud and debris; use a potassium chloride solution (mix 1 teaspoon potassium chloride crystals with 2 gallons of water) to wash equipment, (potassium chloride is deadly to many aquatic invasive species, but harmless to other aquatic organisms and humans); 3) Allow all equipment to dry thoroughly before launching in another body of water.

It will be important for all of us to work together and do everything we can to keep these organisms from spreading. Let's keep Wyoming's waters secure!!

**Robin Kepple, Wyoming  
Game & Fish Dept.**

## PHOTOS WANTED

Submit your photos to me at my email address and when space permits, they will be in the newsletter.

**Editor—Rose-Mary King**

## U.S. FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE'S COMPREHENSIVE CONSERVATION PLAN REDUCES SIZE OF PATHFINDER NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE (NWR)

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service considered and advanced for public input three alternatives for future management of the Pathfinder NWR. These were: "(A) the Current Management Plan (no action alternative), (B) Enhanced Refuge Management, and (C) a Modification of Refuge Boundary (Proposed Action)." The alternative (C) eventually chosen by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service consolidates the boundaries of the Pathfinder NWR, resulting in a reduction in area from 16,806 acres widely distributed among four parcels to a more easily managed single block of 5,990 acres centered around the upper reaches of the Sweetwater arm of Pathfinder Reservoir. Both Audubon Wyoming and the Murie Audubon Society had written letters to the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service opposing modification of the Refuge boundary.

**(Submitted by Jim Brown)**

## WHO NAMES BIRDS?

Suppose you are a naturalist in the 1800's prowling around looking not only for recognizable bird species but more importantly, as yet unidentified species. It may be springtime because you know that the colors of the feathers will be fresh & new and the males will be especially colorful or at least they will stand out in a crowd

of drab females. You see a bird and you are wondering if it is a new species or just one you have never seen before. So you take careful notes in your bird journal, making note of size and shape of head, tail, and beak, and on your drawing you make note of the color of all the bird's parts. Next, you consult with your fellow naturalists to see if any of them have seen a bird of your description. This may take awhile because cell phones, email, and Internet hasn't been "discovered" yet. It may take several years before you are able to establish whether or not the bird you saw is a known or unknown specie. (For purposes of this article, I'm not even going to touch scientific naming!) At last you have established that all your known colleagues have never seen this bird before and you have the privilege of naming it. Do you give it your own name—after all YOU discovered it—or do you name it after your great-aunt Martha, or your best friend?

Over the next months' newsletters, I will share with you who named birds and why they carry a "human's" name before their "bird" name.

- Aiken's Screech Owl - Named in honor of C.E. Aiken, of Colorado Springs, Colo. The first specimen collected by C. E. Aiken, May 29, 1872, in El Paso County, CO
- Abert's Towhee - Described June, 1852, and named in honor of Lt. Abert, from whom the first specimen was obtained in NM
- Anna's Hummingbird - Named by M. Lesson in honor of Mme. Anna, Duchess de Rivoli.

- Allen's Hummingbird - Named in honor of Mr. Chas. A. Allen, who first discovered it at Nicasio, CA and furnished a series of fine specimens
- Anthony's Green Heron - Named in honor of Mr. A. W. Anthony, who contributed so much to the avifauna of the west, collected by Dr. Mearus in the Colorado desert, April 12, 1894.
- Audubon's Warbler - John James Audubon says, "Was discovered by Mr. Townsend, who has done me the honor of naming it after me."
- Audubon's Woodpecker - John James Audubon says, "Presented to me by its discoverer on account of the honor which he conferred upon me," i.e. by naming it in his honor.
- Bachman's Sparrow - Named in honor of Dr. Bachman, who furnished the first account to Mr. Audubon. Discovered on the Edisto, near Harper's Ferry, SC, April 1832.
- Bachman's Warbler - This species was discovered a few miles from Charleston, SC, July, 1833, by Dr. Bachman, for whom it was named.
- Baird's Bunting - Named in honor of his young WHY BIRDS ARE SO NAMED friend, Spencer F. Baird, of Carlisle, PA. First discovered on July 26, 1843, by John G. Bell.
- Bailey's Mountain Chickadee. Grinnell. "I take pleasure in naming this well-marked new chickadee for Mrs. Florence Bailey, whose accurate accounts form an important component of the ornithology of the west."
- Baird's Hawk - Named in honor of Spencer F. Baird of the Smithsonian Institution."
- Barlow's Chickadee - Named for Chester Barlow, an ornithologist of California."
- Bartram's Sandpiper, or Bartramian Sandpiper - I have honored it with the name of my very worthy friend, near whose botanical gardens I first found it.
- Batchelder's Woodpecker - Common, given in honor of the collector and describer. First found at St. Vegas, Hot Springs, NM, December 18, 1882.
- Bell's Sparrow - Named in honor of John G. Bell, who first discovered it in San Diego, CA.
- Bell's Vireo - Named in honor of John G. Bell, who first discovered it near Black Snake Hills, May 4, 1843.
- Bendire's Thrasher - Named in honor of the discoverer, Lt. Bendire."
- Berlandier's Wren - This species has been named by its discoverer, Lieut. Couch, for Dr. Berlandier, of Metamoras, Mexico.
- Bewick's Wren - Named in honor of the reviver of engraving on wood in his country. Found October 19, 1821, in Louisiana, five miles from St. Francisville.
- Bicknell's Thrush - Named in honor of Mr. Eugene P. Bicknell, who first discovered it in the Catskill Mountains.
- Bischoff's Song Sparrow - Named in honor of Ferd Bischoff, who first discovered it at Kadiak Island, 1869.
- Blandig's Finch - Was discovered in Rocky Mountains by Dr. Gambel and named in honor of the scientist, Dr. Blandig.
- Bonaparte's Flycatcher - Discovered by John James Audubon and dedicated to Prince Charles Bonaparte.
- Brewer's Blackbird - Collected by R. Kennicott at Pembina, Minnesota September 20, 1857, and named in honor of Thomas M. Brewer.
- Brewer's Sparrow - Named in honor of Dr. Thomas M. Brewer, of Boston.
- Brewster's Lirmet - Named in honor of Mr. Wm. Brewster, of Cambridge, who first discovered it at Waltham, MA November, 1870.
- Brewster's Warbler - Named in honor of Mr. William Brewster, who first discovered it at Newtonville, MA, May 18, 1870.
- Bryant's Cactus Wren - In honor of Mr. W. E. Bryant, an ornithologist of Lower California. Discovered by A. U. Anthony at St. Telmo, Lower California, April 30, 1893.
- Bullock's Oriole - Named in honor of the discoverer.

(From *Why Birds are so Name* by Katie M. Roads in the *Wilson Bulletin*—named after ornithologist Alexander Wilson.)

**Editor—Rose-Mary King**

## ATTENTION

**P**lease call or email me if you would like to help fold the newsletters once a month—usually done in an hour!

Also, let me know if you would like to receive your newsletter at our website and be taken off the mailing list only for receiving the newsletter via the US Mail—postage rates have gone up!

**Editor—Rose-Mary King**