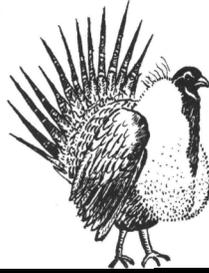


PLAINS & PEAKS



Vol. 45 — Iss. 5 — MAY — 2011

MURIE AUDUBON

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

LANDSCAPING WITH NATIVE AND ADAPTED PLANTS

Wyoming is in a multi-year drought. Snow pack in our Mountains continues to be significantly below normal as is water collected in our area reservoirs. Water restrictions are all but guaranteed this summer. Tom Heald will be our guest speaker for our monthly program in May. This program will look at water wise native and adapted plants suitable for home landscapes. Besides being well adapted to our cold winters and hot summers, these plants are also adapted to our windy, arid conditions and have high alkaline soil tolerances. In addition, many of these plants will attract a variety of wildlife, especially birds. The program will provide tips and techniques to conserve water in the home landscape.



Tom Heald has been an Extension Educator in Wyoming for 22 years. He started his career in 1985 in Riverton. In 1996, he took on an assignment in Rock Springs, and in 1999 transferred to Casper. Recently, Tom's work assignment changed from serving as a local extension Educator to being an

CALENDAR

May 3 - Bird ID Class - ACGC - 7PM
May 5 Bird Class Field Trip
May 8 - Bd. Mtg. - ACGC - 7PM
May 10 - Bird ID Class - ACGC - 7PM
May 11 - General Mtg. - 7PM
May 12 - Bird Class Field Trip
Every Thursday Brown Bag Lunch with the birds - 12 Noon - ACGC

**SAVE PAPER, MONEY & FOLDING TIME—READ YOUR NEWSLETTER AT MURIE'S WEBSITE—CONTACT ROSE-MARY KING—
rking7453@bresnan.net**

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Area Educator for Converse Niobrara and Natrona Counties, specializing in small acre management and rural home landscaping.

Join us on Friday, May 11, 2007 at 7PM at the Oil & Gas Conservation Commission Building at 2211 King Blvd. for tips and techniques to conserve water in the home landscape as well as ideas for plantings that can handle the rigors of Wyoming's climate. As always, the program is free and open to the public!

BRUCE WALGREN



BRUCE'S BRANCH

I've borrowed the idea for this month's "Branch" from Bob Conway, President of Five Valleys Audubon Society in Missoula, Montana. I don't even know Bob, but we receive the Five Valleys newsletter in exchange for our Plains and Peaks. Mr. Conway informed their members that one of the requirements of an Audubon Chapter is to submit an annual report to National Audubon. With that in mind, I'll share with you some of the activities and accomplishments for the year for Murie Audubon.

- We began the year back in August with a well attended potluck picnic at Edness Kimball Wilkins State Park.
- So far this year we've had six general meetings with a total attendance of 288 for an average of 48 per meeting.
- We helped sponsor (with the Casper College Foundation, Casper College Biology Dept., and UW/CC) the "Grail Bird" presentation at Casper College given by Tim Gallagher about the Ivory-billed Woodpecker. Special thanks to Dr. Will Robinson for organizing this event.
- The Christmas Bird counts continue to be a popular event. 34 participants counted 13,403

individual birds representing 68 species in Casper's count circle and 10 people counted 2,410 birds and 52 species at the Bates Hole count.

- Monthly Board meetings are held to handle ongoing activities and administrative affairs.
- Two seed sales were held to help participants provide food for the birds and help fund ongoing activities.
- The Plains and Peaks newsletter is published monthly from September through May and keeps members informed.
- Audubon Adventures Kits were provided to 71 classrooms - Thank you sponsors!!!
- Dr. Charles Preston from the Buffalo Bill Historical Center spoke at our annual banquet in February where over 100 people enjoyed his presentation on Golden Eagles and we celebrated our successful Audubon Adventures campaign.
- The Murie Audubon website www.murieaudubon.org is kept up to date to provide internet users with up-to-date information about the chapter.
- Murie Audubon received restitution funds from the federal district court of Wyoming from cases involving loss of birds. These funds were distributed to bird rehabilitation permit holders in Wyoming at the direction of the court.
- The WyoBirds Listserve, (a combination bird hotline/ discussion service via emails) is now administered by Murie Audubon (subscribe at WYOBIRDS@HOME.EASE.LSOFT.COM). Funding for this project is provided by Audubon chapters in Wyoming as well as interested individuals.

Other ongoing and upcoming activities in which Murie members contribute their time include Sage Grouse Lek monitoring, migration and point counts at adopted IBA sites, bird identification classes and field trips, bird banding, educational activities at the Garden Creek Audubon Center and area schools, the Birdathon fund

raiser, breeding bird surveys and riparian surveys.

I would like to thank all of our volunteers who work many, many hours on our board and committees.

Until next time...BRUCE



BIRD NOTES

Reports of robins are increasing daily, as are Red-winged Blackbirds, and while few people are actually reporting grackles, their vocalizations are quite noticeable! There are increased sightings of bluebirds, Tree Swallows, Barn Swallows - and a sure sign of spring migration - we are starting to see warblers!!! Yellow-rump reports are starting to come in, both Myrtle and Audubon's.

Waterfowl are moving north, shorebirds are starting to come in, grouse are active on the leks, and flocks of Turkey Vultures have been reported by many people. Ann and Wil Hines reported a Canyon Wren calling at Glendo below the dam. The most exciting news may be the Snowy Owl south of Gillette reported by Dr. Keith James on April 21; Keith and Sue had good views of this bird. We were able to get the word out and several people were then able to see this owl, and photos have been posted on the internet. Many thanks to Keith and Sue!!

This is the time of year many of us with a passion for birds wait anxiously for!!! May the Forces of Birding be with you!!!

March Yard Birds - For the month of March, Wayne and I received 169 yard bird selections from 19 states plus the Yukon and the United Kingdom with 80 different species reported. Western Meadowlark and American Robin were tied for most reported yard bird for March.

Black-capped Chickadee came in second. Third place was a four-way tie between Evening Grosbeak, Cedar Waxwing, Mountain Bluebird, and Red-breasted Nuthatch.

Casper: Jim Herold - American Robin, Chris Michelson - Great Horned Owl, Ed Reish - Black-capped Chickadee, Rose-Mary King - Dark-eyed Junco, Jim Brown - Chukar, Casper College Greenhouse - Red-tailed Hawk, Jim Lawrence - Osprey, Gloria Lawrence - Wild Turkey, Mary Louise Zander - Black-capped Chickadee, Tom Zimmerman - American Robin, Arlene Carr - Dark-eyed Junco (Oregon), Garden Creek Audubon Center - American Tree Sparrow, Bruce Walgren - Northern Goshawk, Donna Walgren - Cedar Waxwing; **Cheyenne:** Barb Gorges - Cedar Waxwing; **Douglas:** Billie Snell - Red-winged Blackbird; **Glenrock:** Arlene Carr - Northern Shrike; **Rawlins:** Joan Buchholtz - American Robin; **Riverton:** Suzanne Hargis - Ferruginous Hawk, Bob Hargis - Sharp-shinned Hawk.

Thanks to all who helped with the Back Yard Bird Project in March!! Spring migration is starting!!! We all want to hear what you are seeing. Send your yard bird selection for April to Donna Walgren (ph. 234-7455), 4311 S. Center St., Casper, WY 82601, or email to Pi-ranga_AT_bresnanDOTnet.

DONNA WALGREN



KEN'S CORNER

It's that busiest time of year at the Audubon Center at Garden Creek. Field trips are in full

force already. A springtime tradition, Beginning Birding Class, is getting new friends involved. Birdathon donation letters will be mailed off soon, hopefully to be followed up by numerous birdathon thank yous.

As we transition to summer I invite you all to make the Audubon Center at Garden Creek part of your weekly routine. Stop out for a leisurely stroll along the nature trail on Mondays. Rise and shine for MAPS Bird Banding Tuesday mornings. Bring the grandchildren out on a Wednesday or two for Nature Day Camps. Thanks to Wild Birds Unlimited scholarship opportunities are available. Thursday's favorite noontime event, Brownbag Birding, will continue throughout the summer. Perhaps we can connect with nature from the picnic tables. Jumpstart your weekend with some greatly appreciated volunteer time on Fridays. Enjoy the feeders from the comforts of the shade tree all weekend long.

There is so much going on at the Audubon Center at Garden Creek this summer, so I certainly hope to see each and every one of you all summer long.

**AW Community Naturalist-Casper
KEN KEFFER**

ANNUAL WINTER TRIP (CONCLUDED)

Coming into Worland after dark one is drawn to a well lighted area that houses the oldest sugar-processing mill in Wyoming. It certainly is a well lit area, much better than the town. The streets of Worland roll up early, especially so during the winter months, and it behooves one to get to town early to ensure adequate time to find a good spot to eat and rest.

Worland always struck me as a nice little rustic town. It is the county seat of Washakie County. The county being named after the famous Indian chief, Washakie. The town itself was named after C.R. "Dad" Worland, who had estab-

lished a campsite on the Bridger Trail by Fifteen Mile Creek. His camp became the town of Worland. The land surrounding Worland is a rich farming and cattle feeding area. At one time, the principal agricultural crop



was sugar beets. With a lot of agricultural land, there were a lot of ring-necked pheasants.

On our annual winter trip, Worland was the deciding point on which route we would take for the remainder of our trip. There was the Manderson-Hyattville-Tensleep Route; The Manderson-Greybull-Shell and over the mountain to Sheridan Route (with a night's stay in Sheridan); The Tensleep and over the mountain to Home Route. The one chosen for here is The Manderson-Hyattville-Tensleep Route. This route could end in an overnight stay at Buffalo or a long drive home.

We usually rose early in the morning before dawn after a good night's sleep. There are two routes you can take to Manderson. If we were still searching for a great horned owl, we would go west through town, cross the bridge, and turn onto State Hwy. 433. If we had seen the owl, we might sleep a little later and travel to Manderson on US Hwy 16-20. There was always a great possibility we would see the owl around Manderson.

The drive from Manderson to Hyattville was over State Hwy 31. This is a pretty good back-country drive through ranch land composed of rolling hills and meadowland valleys. We really enjoyed this as it turned up golden eagles, red-tailed and rough-legged hawks, prairie falcons (if we were lucky), and a kestrel or two. Around Hyattville, there is some cultivated land, so we again encountered ring-necked pheasants. At this point, we were more interested in getting to the BLM's recreational area at the Old Taylor Ranch. It is located NE of Hyattville where Dry Medicine Lodge Creek (usually dry for sure) joins Medicine

Lodge Creek. Our main interest here was finding dippers, although there was a good chance of seeing nuthatches, dark-eyed juncos, and woodpeckers. Sometimes before driving to this site, we often continued on the main road up into the juniper covered foothills of the Bighorn Mountain where we would see Townsend's solitaire. Weather conditions prevailing around the area dictated what we could or couldn't do. After viewing a few rough



-legged hawk around the cultivated lands, we would return to Hyattville for the drive to Tensleep.

The drive from Hyattville to Tensleep was mostly over a graveled road. We were really in the back country. A number of golden eagles were found on this drive. As we neared Tensleep we crossed Buffalo Creek where the road divided. If one goes left, continue on the old road into Tensleep. The newer road goes to the right and joins the Black Top road that services the Nowood River area. Going left you will eventually join US Hwy 16 a bit west of Tensleep. This road will sometimes produce northern shrike, kestrels, and rough-legged & red-tailed hawks, especially so in mild winters.

Tensleep is ten sleeps from Laramie; it is ten sleeps from Yellowstone National Park; it is ten sleeps from Stillwater, Montana (Sackett Fort). It always struck me as a peaceful place. We would drive the streets of Tensleep looking for birds and feeders. These varied from year to year.

In or about the village we've found ravens, black-billed magpies, house sparrows, house finches, American goldfinches, robins, and northern flickers. We have on many occasions seen Bohemian waxwings, evening grosbeaks, white-crowned sparrows, and downy woodpeckers.



Traveling east from Tensleep, we start our entrance to the Tensleep Canyon. Before we start a fairly steep ascent of the side hills of the canyon, we stop at the Tensleep Fish Hatchery. Here we may pick up black-capped chickadees, and the red-breasted & white-breasted nuthatches. Dark-eyed junco are another possibility. We then continue our drive. On the upward climb we encounter some really great switchbacks and great views of the canyon. Eventually we arrive at Deerhaven. If there is a good snow pack and the snowmobilers have been active, some times the road can be driven to West Tensleep Lake. This is where we look for mountain chickadee and gray jay. When we reach Meadowlark Lake, we stop birding and set our sights for home and the end of this adventure. It has been another very enjoyable trip.



THE HUMMER
(AKA—Jim Herold)

ELECTION OF OFFICERS 2007-2008

The slate of officers for 2007-08 are:

President - Bruce Walgren

Vice-President - Jim Brown

Recording Secretary - vacant

Treasurer - Chris Michelson

Corresponding Secretary - Lois Layton

Nominations from the floor will be accepted and voted taken at the May 11th meeting.

Board of Directors - Term expires 2009

The following have agreed to serve another two years - Fred Eiserman, Laurie Longtine, Ann Hines, Marci Andre, Stacey Scott, Donna Walgren.

Board of Directors - Term expires 2008

Bob Yonts and Merlyn Herold. New to the Board

of Directors is Mike Braley and Kathy Priebe who have agreed to serve one year.

OWLS IN MYTHOLOGY AND CULTURE

The sighting of the Snowy Owl south of Gillette peaked my curiosity about stories and legends about owls. I found a website with info on this subject at Owl Pages. Some of you may have already discovered this site. It covers a wide range of topics about this species: physiology, vocalizations, photos of owls around the world, articles and news, including studies and papers. In mythology and culture, owls have been regarded in diverse ways; I wanted to share with you some of the various beliefs from around the world that I found.



- The Hopi Indians of the southwest saw the Burrowing Owl as their god of the dead, the guardian of fires and tender of all underground things, including seed germination.
- The Kwakiutl Indians believed that owls were the souls of people and should therefore not be harmed, for when an owl was killed the person to whom the soul belonged would also die.
- In South Africa, the Zulus considered the owl to be the sorcerer's bird.
- In Samoa, it is believed that people descended from an owl.
- In Sweden, the owl was associated with witches.
- The Inuit of Greenland see the owl as a source of guidance and help.
- In Arabia, the owl is a bird of ill omen.
- In China, the owl is associated with lightning (because it brightens the night) and with the drum (because it breaks the silence). Placing owl effigies in each corner of the home protects it against lightning.

In the birding world, I don't know of any particular belief or omen associated with owls (except perhaps as someone's nemesis bird - which happens to be the case with my husband: his nemesis bird is the Eastern Screech-Owl!!). If anyone has any thoughts on this, let me know!

DONNA WALGREN

P.S. I almost forgot - in Hogwarts, owls are the "mail carriers" - Harry Potter has a Snowy Owl named Hedwig that is a vital means of communication!!

(Owl Photo by Rose-Mary King.)

REDUCE, REUSE AND RECYCLE

In an effort to highlight individuals, organizations, companies, and governmental agencies in Wyoming that are recycling or reducing the amount of waste going into our landfills, we are continuing our series of articles about these people.

Recycling in Wyoming and particularly in Casper can be a frustrating endeavor, however, there are opportunities to rid yourself of some things that you aren't sure what to do with and don't want any more.

Like a lot of people this time of year, I've begun sorting the "stuff" that's cluttering my yard, garage, cupboard, and under the sink. Please don't just toss these unused items into the trash, particularly if they could be hazardous. The City of Casper has in place a Household Hazardous Waste Program and will accept a wide variety of items. There is no charge for dropping these things off at the landfill, but you do need to make a reservation (Saturdays only) to bring them to the facility. If you're not sure whether something is hazardous or if the City will accept it, or if you want to make a reservation, call 235-8246. I hope to have some brochures that outline this program at the May monthly meeting.

It is my understanding that two items that

take up a lot of room in the landfill are cardboard and yard wastes. Cardboard and yard wastes are readily recycled. Cardboard is accepted at any of the City's recycling depots and most commercial recycling centers. Yard wastes are more problematic, unless you're composting them yourself. The City does not charge anything if you bring your yard wastes to the landfill, and in fact, you can trade it pound for pound for compost or wood chips. I also hope to have some brochures that outline this program at the May monthly meeting.

The City of Casper has 7 recycling depots at the following locations: Kelly Walsh High School (E. 12th St. and Trojan Drive), Meals on Wheels (E. 12th St. and Lowell St.), North Casper (1700 E. K. Street), Balefill (1886 N. Station Rd.), Rocky Mountain Sporting Goods (1351 CY Avenue), to the rear of Sunrise Shopping Center (39th St. and Poplar Street), Mountain Plaza Shopping Center (Highway 220 and Wyo. Blvd.). Recyclable Material Accepted: aluminum, white office pack paper, magazines and catalogs, newsprint, corrugated cardboard, glass (brown, green and white).

You may learn more about recycling in Casper at the City of Casper's website. You may also want to check out the Wyoming Recycling Directory website. (Adobe Acrobat Reader needed to view this file)

Attention readers: If you know of someone who is Reducing, Reusing or Recycling in Wyoming or would like to submit an article on this topic, please contact Bruce Walgren or Rose-Mary King.

BRUCE WALGREN

(Ed.'s Note - Murie Audubon recycles computer printer and/or copy machine ink cartridges. Bring them to the general meetings for me.)

LONG-DISTANCE GODWIT SETS NEW RECORD

A satellite-tracked Bar-tailed Godwit (*Limosa lapponica*) has set a new record for long-distance non-stop flight. The bird flew from North Island, New Zealand to Yalu Jiang, at the northern end of the Yellow Sea in China - a dis-

tance of 10,200 kilometers.



The Bar-tailed Godwit tracking study is being undertaken as part of the Pacific Shorebird Migration Project; involving biologists from PRBO Conservation Science, the US Geological Survey (USGS) Alaska Science Centre, Massey University and The University of Auckland (both New Zealand). The work was funded by the USGS and the David and Lucile Packard Foundation.

Previous research had revealed the godwits' long journey southward, aided by favorable winds, from Alaska to New Zealand and Australia. The new findings show the godwits' capability in flying northward, without the benefit of tailwind. The flight took just nine days.

Conservationists have highlighted the value of satellite-tracking studies in the conservation of migratory bird species: "Satellite-tracking is an important tool helping us to learn more about the incredible journeys these birds undertake and the threats they face along the way," said Vicky Jones, BirdLife's Global Flyways Officer. "The challenge is to use this knowledge to ensure effective conservation of migratory bird species throughout their flyways. This means protecting populations not only on their breeding and wintering grounds, but also at critical stopover sites used on passage."

Site protection remains a critical issue. Man-made changes-particularly reclamation and pollution-to wetland habitats along flyway routes have contributed to the recent declines observed in many of the world's migratory water bird species.

(From *BirdLife* - 05-04-2007)

FLIGHT PATTERNS BY JONATHAN ROSEN



European starlings have a way of appearing in unexpected places—the United States, for example, where they are not native but owe their origin to a brief reference in Shakespeare's *Henry IV, Part 1*. In 1890, a drug manufacturer who wanted every bird found in Shakespeare to live in America released 60 starlings in Central Park. After spending a few years nesting modestly under the eaves of the American Museum of Natural History, they went from a poetic fancy to a menacing majority; there are now upward of 200 million birds across North America, where they thrive at the expense of other cavity nesters like bluebirds and woodpeckers, eat an abundance of grain—as well as harmful insects—and occasionally bring down airplanes.

In Europe, where the birds are native—Mozart had a pet starling that could sing a few bars of his piano concerto in *G* major—they still have the power to turn heads. Each fall and winter, vast flocks gather in Rome. They spend the day foraging in the surrounding countryside but return each evening to roost. (Rachel Carson, author of *Silent Spring*, called the birds reverse commuters.) They put on breathtaking aerial displays above the city, banking in nervous unison, responding like a school of fish to each tremor inside the group.

The birds are beloved by tourists and reviled by locals—understandably, since the droppings cover cars and streets, causing accidents and general disgust. A flock of starlings is euphoniouly called a “murmuration,” but there is noth-

ing poetic about their appetites. Their ability to focus both eyes on a single object — binocular vision — allows them to peck up stationary seeds as well as insects on the move. In the countryside outside Rome, they feast on olives. Like us, the birds are enormously adaptable but what we admire in ourselves we often abhor in our neighbors.

Richard Barnes' photographs capture the double nature of the birds — or at least the double nature of our relationship to them — recording the pointillist delicacy of the flock and something darker, almost sinister in the gathering mass. Many of Barnes' photographs, which will be shown at Hosfelt Gallery in New York this fall, were taken over two years in EUR, a suburb of Rome that Mussolini planned as a showcase for fascist architecture. The man-made backdrop only enhances the sense of the vast flock as something malign, a sort of avian Nuremberg rally.

It is, of course, natural for birds to surrender individual autonomy to the flock; according to the Roman ornithologist Claudio Carere, who has identified 12 basic flock patterns, the starlings are primarily trying to evade falcons. But we project onto the natural world a large measure of ourselves. In ancient Rome, augurs studied the flight patterns of birds to divine the will of the gods; part of the fascination of the starlings is the way they seem to be inscribing some sort of language in the air, if only we could read it.

A consortium of ornithologists, physicists and biologists in Italy and other European countries has in fact begun studying the birds with the aim of learning not only about the relationship of individual birds to the surrounding flock but about human behavior as well. The project, named StarFLAG, entertains hopes of using the birds to illuminate herding responses in human beings with a particular eye on stock-market panics.

The starling in *Henry IV* that inspired those first American birds is a mimic, capable of tormenting a king by speaking the name of Mortimer. Mozart's bird sang his own music back to him. But Mozart may also have smuggled a few of

the bird's notes into his own compositions. When humans contemplate animals, the question is always who is imitating whom. The starlings that so plague us in America (where we kill more than a million of the birds a year) grew out of our desire for nature to be poetic, rather than truly wild; they reflect the consequences of such self-serving fantasies. It isn't their fault that they treated an open continent much as we ourselves did.

More and more, as surrounding habitat is flattened, we may find fragments of the wild world coming home, literally, to roost. The abundance of starlings in Rome is partly the result of climate change—they used to go farther south before Roman winters warmed up. Bird-watching thrives on the recognition that the urban and the wild must be understood together. We are, after all, urban and wild ourselves, and still figuring out how to make the multiple aspects of our nature mesh without disaster.

Jonathan Rosen is the editorial director of Nextbook. His book about bird-watching, *The Life of the Skies*, will be published next year. (Submitted by Bart Rea from the New York Times.)

MURIE AUDUBON MEMORIALS

As loved ones pass on, friends and family can make contributions to Murie Audubon in their name. We will gratefully accept your gift and send an acknowledgement to the loved one's family.

You may designate a particular project you would like the gift to go toward - education, Audubon Adventures, Murie's Bird Hospital, the general fund, etc. Contact Chris Michelson, P.O. Box 2112, Casper, WY 82601; ph. (307) 234-8726.

QUICK CHIRPS

THE CHEYENNE BIG DAY COUNT will be May 19, starting at 6:30 a.m. at the Cheyenne Botanic Gardens parking lot. If you are coming in the day before, May 18, be sure to join us for our potluck in the Botanic Gardens greenhouse from 5-7 p.m.--right in the middle of our favorite IBA and warbler magnet, Lions Park.

Folks from out of town can bring things that don't need cooking--though there is a stove. The locals can bring hot dishes. We'll have paper plates if you don't bring your own dishes. Barb Gorges

WING-TAGGED TURKEY VULTURES - Many of you have reported seeing flocks of returning Turkey Vultures, though most of the birds have been too high to see if any have tags on their wings. Researchers have tagged the wings of 100 TVs wintering in Venezuela. Some people have already spread the word about the tagged birds, but if you haven't heard the details - look for either blue tags with black numbers or red tags with white numbers. To report sightings of tagged vultures, go to Hawk Mountain, or call 570-943-3411.

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Robin Alexander - Casper
 Laura Stadfield - Casper
 Stephanie West - Casper
 Angela Safranek - Encampment
 Pauline Irons - Glenrock
 Fred Steinbach - Glenrock
 Leslie Frattaroli - Jackson
 Cherie Hawley - Jackson
 Jason K. Pietrzak - Kelly
 Nancy Davis - Rawlins
 Annie Proulx - Saratoga
 Deanne Heidemann - Wamsutter
 Joseph B. Burke - Wilson
 Sally Phinny - Wilson

(Ed.'s Note - With the Membership Chair's office now filled after YEARS of not having one, we want to begin recognizing and welcoming our new members!)

MONTANA BIRD FESTIVAL JUNE 1-3, 2007

Montana Audubon is holding the annual Montana Bird Festival in Ennis, Montana this year, organized in partnership with the local Sacajawea and Pintler Audubon Societies. The weekend will be filled with birding and educational activities for birders of all ages and experience levels. Children are very welcome (binoculars and guidebooks provided), and the festival is open to the public. Highlights include a selection of 15 local field trips in and around the Madison Valley, including a historic tour of nearby Virginia City and a Beginning Birder excursion, Saturday afternoon presentations and workshops about birds, ways to sharpen your birding skills, how to build bird houses, the locations of good places to see birds in Montana and much more.

For more information about the festival, including registration and local lodging visit the web site at www.mtaudubon.org or call 406/443-3949.

CHPAS 7TH ANNUAL CAMPOUT-The 7TH annual campout organized by members of the CHPAS will be June 8-10 on the Green River, just below Fontenelle Dam, in western Wyoming. All interested birdwatchers, at any level of expertise, are welcome to sign up for more information. There is no registration fee. Please contact Mark G o r g e s at 6 3 4 - 0 4 6 3 o r mgorges_AT_junoDOTcom.

The Bureau of Land Management's Slate Creek Campground on the river will be the headquarters this time. Easy car and truck access is from Wyo. Hwy. 372, northwest of Green River. There are no campground fees. Anyone who prefers not to camp can look for accommodations in Kemmerer or Green River.

Saturday morning birding will concentrate

along the river's bottomland cottonwood galleries. The area has been described as a migrating bird trap by Oliver Scott, author of "A Birder's Guide to Wyoming," published by the American Birding Association. "It is particularly good in late May and early June for passerines, especially eastern warblers such as the rare ones like Northern Parula, Chestnut-sided, Magnolia, Blackburnian, Worm-eating, Hooded, and the only state records (as of 1993) for Connecticut, Mourning and Hermit, as well as the common ones like MacGillivray's and Wilson's. Large numbers of Western Tanagers can be held here for awhile, along with Bullock's Orioles. There are usually great numbers of swallows of which the Violet-green will be the most common."

Saturday afternoon campers can lend a hand with the traditional work project. This year it is any necessary repairs to a fence around an enclosure set up to monitor the impact of livestock and wildlife grazing on the habitat.

Saturday evening is the traditional potluck cookout and an informal program. Folks may wish to fish, canoe or raft.

On Sunday, people may choose to bird the area again or visit nearby Seedskaatee National Wildlife Refuge before heading home.

BARB GORGES

BOARD MEETING NOTES- Bird ID classes will be held at ACGC on Thursdays at 7PM with field trips on the following Saturdays - May 3 & 5 - Hat Six Sage Grouse Lek and Ayers Natural Bridge Park; May 10 & 12 Edness Kimball Wilkins State Park. Cost of each lesson is \$5.00. Our membership drive is off to a good start. Members and guests sign a guest book at monthly meetings. Guests will then be sent a welcome letter (and possibly a PNP newsletter). The contest for kids to recruit new members is a summer project ending in September with a picnic and prizes. June Calmes