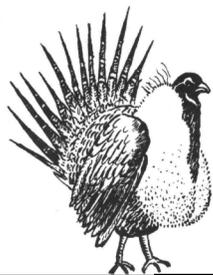


PLAINS & PEAKS



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MURIE AUDUBON

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

BATS IN WYOMING

Our guest speaker for April has handled eleven of the 18 species of bats that either live or migrate through Wyoming. Laura Beard has been with Wyoming Game and Fish's Nongame program for just over a year. Before that, she worked for Alaska Fish and Game, surveying bats in SE Alaska.

She will discuss bat ecology in Wyoming, touching on white-nose syndrome (WNS) along with other conservation issues affecting bats. As the fungus that causes WNS continues to spread west, more species will become exposed and their specific ecology and suite of behaviors may affect whether they experience mortality. The genus *Myotis* appears to be the most af-



CALENDAR

April 8—6:00PM Board Meeting followed by *General Meeting* at 7:00PM, OGCC Bldg., 2211 King Blvd.

April Field Trips—see pgs. 2 & 3

April 25—May's newsletter article deadline

Brown Bag Lunch—see pg. 3

May 8-15—Spring Birdathon

June 14 & 21, July: 2, 12, 26, & 30—EKW State Park Banding dates

SAVE TREES—Get your newsletter at murieaudubon.org! Contact Rose-Mary at kingchick3547@live.com or 262-4861.

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fectured, and this group is the most numerous in Wyoming, therefore it is important to get detailed baseline data on the distribution of this genus before the arrival of the fungus.

Laura and her colleagues have just finished up an eight year survey of bats throughout the state. Four years were dedicated to categorizing which bats live in forests, the second four years looked at cliffs and caves. They will be changing focus soon to the eastern part of the state, which represents the East-West division between certain analogous species.

Come and hear more about bats in Wyoming on Friday, April 8, 2016, 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 & info.
from Laura Beard**

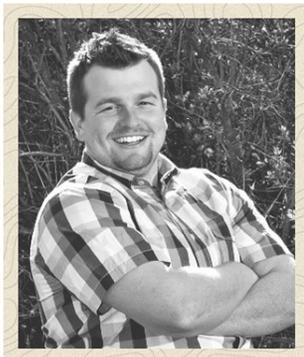
Note: Estimates say that one bat can eat up to 1,000 mosquitoes in a night. And mosquitoes are responsible for more diseases in humans than those from bats. While bats may carry rabies, the transmission rate is extremely low.

Bruce Walgren

“Myself, I rather like the bat. / It’s not a mouse, it’s not a rat. / It has no feathers, yet has wings. / It’s quite inaudible when it sings.”

Ogden Nash

FROM THE PRESIDENT’S FIELD NOTES



It is officially SPRING! The birds would seem to agree with this notion as well. It’s time to

clean off those binoculars, dust off the field guides, and mentally prepare yourself for the spring migration!

If you’re looking for the best places to bird around Casper during the spring migration, here is a short list:

Edness Kimball Wilkins State Park (Fee area)
Reshaw Park (in Evansville)
33 Mile Rd (near the airport)
Goldeneye Reservoir (west of Casper)

I would encourage you all to try a new spot as well! Spend some time looking in new areas or at new birds you might usually ignore. Want a new challenge for the year? Try using eBird! It’s a fun way to log and track all of your bird sightings!

April Field Trips

There is a field trip to Kearney, NE to see the Sandhill Crane Migration on April 1st. This field trip is **FULL**.

Look for a note about an April 9th field trip to the Hat Six Lek from Stacey Scott.

There will be a field trip on April 16th to visit a private Greater Sage-Grouse lek. This field trip has not been set as of this newsletter.

Finally, there will be a field trip to Rawhide WHMA and Table Mountain WHMA on May 21st. If you have interest in this field trip, contact Zach Hutchinson at zhutchinson@audubon.org.

Community Naturalist Update

Education: The National Audubon Society is now providing their smart phone app for Bird Identification for FREE! Make sure to check it out if you own a smart phone or tablet.

MAPS Banding Station: There will be a MAPS Bird Banding Station in Edness Kimball Wilkins State Park this year. It will be open to the public to attend and actively participate. There will be multiple training sessions later in spring to prepare for the station. The dates for the Edness Kimball Wilkins State Park have been set:

June: 14th & 21st

July: 2nd, 12th, 26th, & 30th

Other: I have been diligently working in my off time to put the final touches on the Great Wyoming Birding Trail. We are in talks with a development group to turn the trail into a mobile phone application that would be available nationwide! With ecotourism being such an integral part of Wyoming industry, this app has great potential. Audubon Rockies will be looking for more sponsors/donors for the app, and any recommendations can be sent to Zach Hutchinson at zhutchinson@audubon.org.

Brown bag lunch is back! We will meet at 11:30 AM at Game & Fish at the dates below.
 Dates: April 29th 11:30 AM – 1:30 PM
 May 27th 11:30 AM – 1:30 PM

BIRD NOTES



According to the calendar, we are officially into Spring. Of course, in Wyoming that is not exactly correct; however, Wyoming's weather does fluctuate back and forth – 60 degree temps one day and possibly a raging snowstorm the next day. So it must be “challenging” for migrating birds trying to work their way back northward. Therefore, species such as Robins, Red-winged Blackbirds, and Mountain Bluebirds that arrived in March may have experienced days when “they wished they had put off that northward trek!!” Hopefully, April will not be quite as “wintry” as birds make their way back to their summer territories.

Yard Bird Project – For the month of February, we received 25 reports from 14 locations in 4 states plus British Columbia and Yukon Territory; 23 species were reported. Many Thanks to all who helped with the Project!!! **Casper, WY:** Barb Yonts – American Crow, Ed Reish – European Starling, Bruce Walgren – Gray-crowned Rosy-Finch, Chris Michelson – Northern Sawwhet Owl, Ann Hines – Pine Siskin, Bob Yonts – Red-winged Blackbird, Donna Walgren – Sharp-shinned Hawk, Casper College Greenhouse –

Townsend's Solitaire, Bart Rea – Sharp-shinned Hawk; **Cheyenne, WY:** Barb Gorges – Northern Flicker; **Dubois, WY:** Anna Moscicki – Common Redpoll, Michael Kenney – White-winged Crossbill; **Evansville, WY:** Keith James – Merlin; **Gillette, WY:** Verna Hays – Dark-eyed Junco (slate-col); **Ucross, WY:** Ruth Salvatore – Canada Goose; **Glendale, AZ:** Judy Timperley-Mathias – Gila Woodpecker; **Sonoita, AZ:** Gloria Lawrence – Rufous Hummingbird, Jim Lawrence – Broad-billed Hummingbird; **Fort Nelson, BC:** Bruce Bennett – Snow Bunting; **North Port, FL:** Nina Timperley – Sandhill Crane, Marvin Timperley – Bald Eagle; **Bellevue, NE:** Clem Klaphake – Varied Thrush; **Gering, NE:** Alice Kenitz – Snow Goose; **Scottsbluff, NE:** Lonnie Frimann – American Woodcock; **Whitehorse, YT:** Dark-eyed Junco (slate-col).

There was a short article in the *Casper Star-Tribune* about the age of an injured Bald Eagle taken to the Teton Raptor Center. The bird had been found near the National Elk Refuge, probably hit by a vehicle. The eagle had been banded as a fledgling for a Wyoming study in 1982 – making the bird about 34 years old!! (Biologists noted that Bald Eagles typically live about 20 years.) Amy Brennan McCarthy, Executive Director of the Teton Raptor Center, told us that the eagle is doing well, but still has a lot of rehab ahead; she says they are “cautiously optimistic.” (Ed.'s Note: An article about this eagle, also, appeared in the March 21 edition of *USA Today State-by-State* under Wyoming.)



FIELD TRIP



The annual Sage-Grouse strutting field trip is Saturday, April 9. We will meet at 5:30 AM at the Eastside Ridley's (used to be Safeway)

parking lot. We will visit the Hat 6 Lek. Hopefully there are still birds on this lek. The houses are closing in, and the birds are being pushed off. I am, also, counting birds on some of the Two-Bar leks, and if anyone would like to come along or want more details on the field trip, call me at 262-0055. These counts are good weather only, so I do most of them during the week. If I don't return your call, try again. My ears are no longer good enough to hear the cell phone over the tractor. Stacey Scott

SPRING BIRDATHON



One of these days it really will be spring in Wyoming; so it is time to start thinking about the 2016 BIRDATHON.

This year Audubon Rockies is planning a region-wide birding fund raiser to support the Community Naturalist program which includes our own Zach Hutchinson. This event will be held during the week of May 8-15 with teams all the way from Devils Tower south to Pagosa Springs. I am hoping to enlist more birding teams in Wyoming to join with Audubon Rockies staff, board and other volunteers to solicit pledges from friends, neighbors, relatives, and anyone who owes you a favor, to support this event and help expand the Community Naturalist program into more schools and more outdoor activities for kids and adults.

The way this works is that if you are willing to help, you put together a small team to contact prospective donors to make a pledge to Audubon Rockies of an amount per-species that your team identifies on any 24-hour period dur-

ing that second week of May; anything from \$.10 to \$10 per bird that you and your team identify that day, either by sight or sound. Or your donors can make a direct gift to Audubon Rockies, but that takes some of the fun out of it. The real goal here is not how many species you see but rather how many sponsors you can get. Audubon Rockies can supply you with a sample solicitation letter, pledge form, a spread-sheet form for tracking pledges, gifts and payments. The Fort Collins regional office will keep track of donations as they come in, send acknowledgements and tax receipts to your donors, and keep you informed of donations that go straight to the office so that you can personally thank them. And I will be available with advice from past experience doing this.

So, I encourage you to get involved by letting me know if you are interested by contacting me at: bdrea@tribcsp.com. I am hoping that region wide, we can raise enough to fund one Community Naturalist staff position.

Bart Rea

AFFILIATE OF THE WEEK: WYOMING WILDLIFE FEDERATION

FEBRUARY 15, 2016



In honor of our 80th Anniversary celebration throughout 2016, the National Wildlife Federation is recognizing each of our Affiliate Partners in a special "Affiliate of the Week" blog series that showcases the dedicated conservation efforts taking place across the country each day. This week we celebrate our affiliate, the Wyoming Wildlife Federation, and their commitment to wildlife.

WHO WE ARE

The Wyoming Wildlife Federation (WWF), founded in 1937, is the oldest and largest sportsmen advocacy and conservation organization in the state. Our mission is simple: to protect and enhance habitat, perpetuate quality hunting and fishing opportunities, and conserve and promote America's public lands and recreational opportunities in Wyoming.

WHAT WE DO

WWF champions species conservation and brings communities together through a number of different outreach methods and channels, including:

- **Collaborations and government relations**, such as the efforts for the greater sage-grouse, which saw an important victory in 2015 with the decision not to list the iconic bird on the Endangered Species List.
- **Community leadership and organizing efforts**, which bring people together to provide constructive comments on resource management plans that impact wildlife. A particular focus for efforts like these in the public lands arena include securing county resolutions to stop large-scale public land transfers in Wyoming.
- **Drafting policy recommendations with expertise and WWF member engagement** for the Wyoming Game and Fish Department, which manages Wyoming's wildlife resources. Just recently, WWF was a leader in crafting definitions for big game migration habitats in Wyoming. Migration routes put deer and elk at the right place for forage at the right time of year, and these prime habitats are vital to healthy wildlife populations. Wintering grounds, calving areas, and other defining characteristics of migration habitats will now be universal for land use management decisions and when it comes such as impacts as oil and gas development and other activities.
- **Serving as the voice for sportsmen and women**, primarily by providing testimony to the Wyoming legislature. More than 75 years since the organization's founding, the primary focus of WWF remains: *to conserve wildlife, habitat and outdoor opportunities.*

MAKING A NATIONAL IMPACT

Wyoming is highly valued for its plentiful wildlife resources and wide open spaces. WWF is a leader in wildlife conservation and rallying sportsmen and women for the cause. Local decisions with wildlife in mind, coupled with on-the-ground conservation efforts, pay dividends to those who live in the state as well as to those who visit.

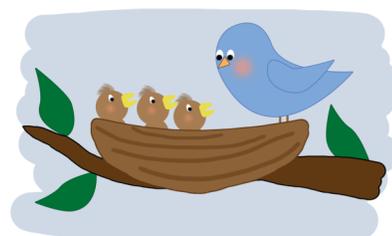
This week, WWF launched a major public lands campaign, "Wildlife Lands, Public Lands," and its first assignment for 2016: the Wyoming Public Lands Initiative with initial grant funding from the National Wildlife Federation.

This statewide initiative looks to introduce a comprehensive legislative package for a bill to be introduced in Congress in 2018, and will commence this spring with Wilderness Study Areas, which will become the launching pad for public lands and land use recommendations in Wyoming counties with Wilderness Study Areas. WWF, along with its sportsmen and conservation partners, will be at the table advocating for wildlife and our outdoor heritage, and keeping our public lands in public hands.

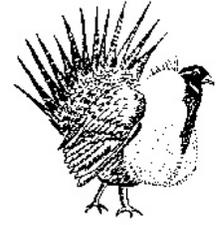
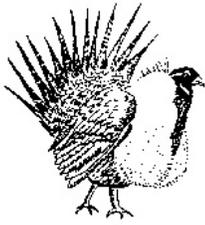
GET INVOLVED

What can WWF members do? Please write your local officials and attend these public meetings. WWF will provide meeting times/locations and the data they are gathering to support this collaborative process. Check the [WWF website](#) for more information and sign up for email notices by becoming a WWF member.

Wyoming is the poster child when it comes to the nation's wildlife and wild places, and that's why WWF encourages all wildlife enthusiasts — from Wyoming and across the nation — to sign up and become a member of WWF. This organization is dedicated to working on behalf of Wyoming's wildlife and the hunters, anglers and wildlife enthusiasts who value our natural and outdoor heritage.



HELP SUPPORT MURIE AUDUBON SOCIETY BY BECOMING A "FRIEND OF MURIE AUDUBON"



The annual cost of being an individual or family 'Friend' will be a donation of \$10 or more. Benefits include: Free monthly programs, free field trips, subscription to the monthly *Plains and Peaks* newsletter (also, available at www.murieaudubon.org). Your name is not shared with other organizations. All of your funds are used locally. Check all that apply.

- \$10 One year
- Audubon Adventures (\$45.65 each classroom)
- Other (Designate) \$ _____
- WyoBirds Listserve (An amount of your choosing) \$ _____

Total \$ _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ ST _____ ZIP _____

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Make checks payable to Murie Audubon Society and mail to: Murie Audubon Society, PO Box 2112, Casper, WY 82602. ATTN: Treasurer.

(Use your printer to print just this page, fill out, and send to the above address.)

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**YAY!
BIRDING!**

MAS VISION STATEMENT

The Vision of Murie Audubon Society is to instill a passion for nature in present and future generations through awareness, enjoyment, understanding, appreciation, conservation and advocacy.

AUDUBON ROCKIES - REGIONAL OFFICE OF NATIONAL AUDUBON SOCIETY

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**NOTICE TO FRIEND OF MURIE NEWSLETTER RECIPIENTS:**

Those who have not paid in one year or more should see "Expired" and a date of Expiration on your mailing label, probably on the same line as your name. You will only receive one more (October) newsletter after this one. If you feel this is in error, please contact Bruce Walgren (234-7455) and we can work out the details.

MAS MISSION STATEMENT

The Mission of Murie Audubon Society is to promote the conservation of birds and other wildlife through education and enhancements of natural habitats, understanding, appreciation, conservation and advocacy.