

MURIE AUDUBON'S
PLAINS & PEAKS

May 2019 VOL. 53 ISSUE 4

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UPCOMING EVENTS

May 10 Iceland: Not As Cold As It Sounds
7pm at Izaak Walton Clubhouse, 4205 Fort Caspar
Road
May 27? Little Red Creek Field Trip
7am Game and Fish Parking Lot

SPECIAL FEATURES

Kid's Corner pg 2
Cliff Swallows
Wild Bird Rehabbers pg 5
Organizations To Help Birds

FROM THE PRESIDENT'S FIELD NOTES



Happy Spring!

Today I volunteered as a crossing guard for a 5K race at Amoco Park. In between runners and walkers, I had a bit of downtime to do some birding. There were meadowlarks, redwing blackbirds, and song sparrows easily identifiable. Then I heard a very unique sounding bird that would fly closer and then fly away. Then come closer, and fly away. I couldn't leave my station to investigate, but I ended up racking my brain to determine, what on earth would make the honk-squeak I was hearing in Casper. Alas, the mystery became solved. A squeaky bike tire, though unlike any I've ever heard before. I'd love to hear your mistaken bird call stories. Surely, I'm not the only one who's been fooled.

On another note, I wanted to update you on chapter news. At our April general meeting, the membership approved the updated articles to the constitution and bylaws. Both of these votes passed by 3/4 majority. Thank you, everyone, who gave input and dedicated time to update this nearly twenty-year-old document. The board also visited our "Piggery" property near Morad Park, and wow, were we surprised by what we found there! Some industrious human residents built a giant bike ramp. I'm sure Harry can tell you more about it, as he took the time to level the ramp. Our main reason for visiting was to prevent unleashed dogs causing unleashed havoc to the habitat in the area, increase awareness and improve bird habitat in the area. We would love some help in monitoring. If you happen to be in the area, let us know if you see any destruction.

Hope you've been out birding lately, even if you're fooled by bike tires!

Jenny Edwards

KIDS CORNER



Cliff Swallow

Cliff Swallows originally inhabited open canyons and river valleys with rocky cliffs for nesting. Many still nest in these habitats, but others have adapted to nesting on man-made structures, especially under bridges and freeways. They require a source of mud for their nests, and they apparently have specific nesting requirements that are as yet unknown, as their distribution is patchy, and there are many areas that appear to be suitable habitat that host no Cliff Swallows. Cliff Swallows feed almost entirely on flying insects. Cliff Swallows have tidy, well-constructed nests, formed from balls of mud that they collect in their beaks. These nests are built on vertical walls, natural or man-made, frequently with some sort of sheltering overhang. Photo of nest on page 9.

Source: http://birdweb.org/birdweb/bird/cliff_swallow

MURIE AUDUBON PROGRAM PRESENTS



Iceland

ICELAND: NOT AS COLD AS IT SOUNDS

Jim Brown and Karen Anfang will be our guest speakers for the May program. Below, in their own words, is a description of what you will be able to hear and see about their trip:

In September 2017, we spent nine days circumnavigating Iceland clockwise by motor coach via the 828 mile long Ring Road, numerous secondary routes and a couple of ferries. With 340,000 people, 800,000 sheep, and 80,000 horses occupying an area 40 per cent the size of Wyoming, Iceland rivals the Cowboy State in wide open spaces. We traveled as far north as Husavik on [Skjálfandi](#) bay, just 35 miles from the Arctic Circle and as far south as the Westmannaeyjar Islands, where in 1973 the Edfell

eruption destroyed 400 homes in the town of Heimaey. In between and all around we skirted rugged coastlines indented by long sinuous inlets (fjords) fed by streams and rivers - more often than not, emerging as waterfalls from the enfolding volcanic mountains. The falls vary from ribbons of melt water cascading down cliffs hundreds of feet high to torrents the size of the North Platte River plunging over precipices measuring tens of feet. In remote valleys, white-washed farm buildings, invariably with red roofs, dot pastures still green in mid-September. Only one per cent of Iceland can be considered "forested," a generous adjective for scrub willow and birch. We hiked in Iceland's leading woodland, *Hallormsstaðaskógur* National Forest, which covers all of three square miles!

The lure for many travelers is the "Golden Circle," an area of southwest Iceland encompassing water falls, volcanic landscape, historic sites, landward extension of the mid-Atlantic rift, and a geothermal area (modest by Yellowstone standards) accessible by day trip from Reykjavik. We enjoyed them all, but were enchanted more by the fishing villages clinging to the remote west, north and east coasts. From one of them, Hofn, we caught our first glimpse of [Vatnajökull](#), the largest [ice cap](#) in Europe by volume and source of numerous glaciers, one of which calves icebergs southward into "Glacier Lagoon," the setting for the opening scene of the Bond film "View to a Kill" (1984) and the car chase on ice in Bond's "Die Another Day" (2002). A duck boat ride on the lagoon left us shaken but not stirred. We concluded our sojourn in Reykjavik, where no tour would be complete without a visit to the Icelandic Phallogical Museum, exhibiting reproductive equipment from 93 species of animals, (allegedly including elves and trolls!).

Please join us on Friday, May 10, 2019 at 7 pm at the Izaak Walton Clubhouse at 4205 Fort Caspar Road for this program. As always, the program is free and open to the public! See you there!

THANK YOU!

As someone who has a little experience with putting together Power Point type presentations, I know how much time it can involve. Figuring out exacting what you want in presentation, in what order, and how to limit the amount of time it takes to present it. Sorting photos alone may take most of your time, then finding any photo or data that you may need to fill in the blanks. So, thanks go out to all our presenters from this past season for their work putting together their presentations, helping (and/or sometimes writing) program announcements, and of course presenting the program for us.

Thanks also go out to all the folks that bring refreshments to our programs, we all appreciate the time you take to provide us with treats.

Finally, thanks to the Izaak Walton League for letting us use their facility for our Board Meetings and programs, you stepped up when we lost our previous venue.

Have a great spring and summer and, if not before, we'll see you in September.

Bruce Walgren, Program Chair

WYOMING'S WILD BIRD REHABBERS



Nathan Barnes of Wind River Raptors examines a Golden Eagle

Periodically, Murie Audubon receives certain restitution funds from cases involving loss of birds from the federal district court. Murie then distributes these funds to the bird rehabilitators in Wyoming. Currently, there are three organizations in Wyoming that receive and rehabilitate wild birds. While helpful, these funds are usually just a tiny portion of the funds needed to pay the vet bills, food and lodging for injured birds. The following is a short summary of each rehabber and their contact information.

Ironside Bird Rescue, Inc. started in 1987 and is run by Susan Ahalt near Cody, WY. Here, in her own words, is the recap for 2018: "Last year (2018) was a record for me, I had 174 birds total. At one point I had 30 here, every cage, mew, flight was full. The worst part was the five Golden Eagles who came in with West Nile Virus. One from Gillette died. Two had to be euthanized, one from Clark, one from Gillette. Two survivors are now in my eagle barn and will be released in the spring when the weather is nice. They all came here within less than two weeks. I got in a lot of Rough-legged Hawks in the beginning of 2018 and was able to release all but a couple of them. Had lots of Great Horned Owls

too, most were releasable, two going to Missouri on Wednesday. Also had four ravens, don't usually get many of them. Two released, one euthanized and one waiting for permit so I can send it to MS. I also sent a Turkey Vulture to FL, one to TX, one Great Horned Owl, and Red-tailed Hawk to TX, one Osprey to CA, one magpie to NM, and one Great Horned Owl to CT. The worst part is that Delta left Cody so I have to drive all my birds to Billings to ship them to their new homes. Now that I have to pay for vet work, my bills were running up to \$3000 per month for a while. And of course, with all those birds I had to buy a lot of frozen food for them. The feed bills were over \$1000 a month."

"It's been much slower so far this year (2019) as very few Rough-Legged Hawks have come to this area. The rabbit population has crashed, so not much prey base here. As I mentioned, this is my 32nd year of rehabbing. Over the years I've added many flights and mews but it sometimes isn't enough. Thank goodness for those people who follow me on Facebook and donate to my PayPal account. I do have a couple family foundations and, of course, the power company has been supporting me for almost my whole time doing this work. Every little bit helps and the Audubon is one of those who is a great supporter of what I do. Thanks for including me."

You may follow Ironside on Facebook at <http://facebook.com/ironsidebirdrescueinc> or donations may be sent to Ironside Bird Rescue, 49 Road 2 DAW, Cody, WY 82414

Teton Raptor Center based in Wilson, WY, was started in 1997 by field biologists and environmental educators Roger Smith and Margaret Creel, it serves northwest Wyoming as well as Idaho. In 2018, the staff of Teton Raptor Center cared for 127 injured, ill, or orphaned birds of prey, provided 389 engaging programs to 31,168 locals and visitors from around the world; sold and distributed 3,000 Poo-Poo Screens (prevents wildlife entrapment in vault toilets). It has conducted research projects on Bald Eagles, Golden Eagles, Great Gray Owls, Flammulated Owls, and contributed to the conservation of raptor species throughout the country.

Further information about the Teton Raptor Center may be found at <https://tetonraptorcenter.org/> and should you wish, you may support them by donating online or by mail to PO Box 1805, Wilson WY 83014.

Wind River Raptors, founded by Nathan Barnes, is focused on rescue, rehabilitation, and conservation of birds of prey and their habitats in the state of Wyoming. Wind River Raptors also strives to educate people of all ages about raptors and attempts to better the current methods of raptor rehabilitation.

Wind River Raptors is housed in a dedicated facility (known as the "Center") on a privately owned ranch in the Sinks Canyon ecosystem near Lander, Wyoming. The Center is equipped with an intensive care unit (ICU) that includes temperature- and humidity-controlled intensive care units that can supply oxygen to injured birds of prey.

Wind River Raptors is dependent upon volunteers and donations from the public to rescue, rehabilitate, feed, and house sick, injured, and juvenile birds of prey with the ultimate goal of releasing them into the wild.

Wind River Raptors was hands-on with 144 birds of prey in 2016, 104 birds of prey in 2017, and over 100 birds in 2018..

For more information or to donate to Wind River Raptors, visit their web site at <https://www.windriverraptors.org/home.html> or by mail to PO Box 1518, Lander, WY 82520.

2019 is starting out fast, with four Eagles (Golden and Bald) among the raptors being rescued in the first month of the year. We are particularly passionate about these amazing, very large raptors.

Along with the spring migration season will be more birds in our state and of course more birds may end up in one of these facilities. Please consider donating your time or monetarily to one or all of them. All three of these organizations are 501(c)(3) non-profits.

LITTLE RED CREEK FIELD TRIP



Field Trip, Memorial Day Week-end. I will run a bird trip to Little Red Creek on Memorial Day Week-end. We will leave at 7:00 AM from the Game and Fish parking lot, and be back by lunch time. The roads into Little Red Creek are dirt, so it doesn't take much rain to stop us. My preference is Monday, May 27, but I won't know what my work schedule is until the middle of May. I might only be available on Saturday, May 25. Please let me know if you are interested, and I will let you know which day we will have the trip. The birds in this area are very interesting. In past years, we have had White-throated Swifts, Gray Flycatcher, Dusky Flycatchers, Ash-throated Flycatcher, Violet-green Swallow, Bushtit, Rock Wren, Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, Mountain Bluebird, Solitary Vireo, Virginia's Warbler, Black-throated Gray Warbler, Chat, Green-tailed and Spotted Towhees, and American Goldfinch. My phone is 307-262-0055 and my email is hustace@gmail.com. Stacey Scott

MURIE AUDUBON MEMBERS AND FRIENDS INVITED TO CHEYENNE BIG DAY

The Cheyenne Big Day Bird Count is May 18 and Cheyenne Audubon members invite Murie Audubon members and friends to join us. Our chapter's Big Day at the peak of migration is a 50 or 60-year-old chapter tradition and Murie folks have been part of it for much of that time. We appreciate your extra eyeballs since it can make the difference between seeing 100 species and possibly seeing 150.

The count will begin at 6:30 a.m. in Lions Park, by the Cheyenne Botanic Gardens, [710 S. Lions Park Drive](#). We will meet in the parking lot south of the Children's Village walled garden. On the other side of the lot is the new picnic shelter and restroom. If you want to join us later (or want more details), call Mark Gorges, 307-287-4953, to get our current location. You may depart the field trip at any time.

Our traditional route is within our Christmas Bird Count circle centered on the State Capitol. We begin with a walk around Sloans Lake at Lions Park, a Wyoming Important Bird Area, and then move on to the famous Wyoming Hereford Ranch, another IBA, known to harbor exciting migrant warbler species around WHR Reservoir #1 and ranch headquarters.

We wrap up the group birding by around lunchtime or early afternoon at the High Plains Grasslands Research Station west of downtown. Bring your own lunch or pick up some fast food along our route.

--Barb Gorges, president, Cheyenne – High Plains Audubon Society

HELP WANTED

Hi:

This is to let you know that the Platte River Trails Trust is going to be hiring an intern this summer (coinciding with school's schedule) to help with general maintenance along the trails and around the Pumphouse. If you know of any college students who might be interested in a summer job, they can contact Angela Emery at (307) 577-1206.

Bart

BIRD BANDING 2019!



I am including the banding dates for 3 of our 4 stations in Wyoming. We are in need of volunteers this year, and if anyone is seriously interested in helping, we will do an early training session. Set up for stations is currently, TBD. As always, our bird banding stations are open to the general public to come and watch.



Edness K. Wilkins State Park: 6/4, 6/11, 6/25, 7/2, 7/16, 7/23, 8/6

Bart Rea Cabin: 6/6, 6/13, 6/27, 7/1, 7/18, 7/25, 8/5

Lindzey Ranch (Laramie): 6/7, 6/14, 6/29, 7/8, 7/19, 7/24, 8/8

Keyhole State Park: Visit our website for more information!

Enjoy your spring!

Zach Hutchinson
Community Naturalist
c: 307.247.0700



Cliff Swallows building their nests. Photo courtesy of https://kids.kiddle.co/Image:Cliff_Swallow-27527-2.jpg

HELP SUPPORT MURIE AUDUBOND SOCIETY CHAPTER BECOME A 'FRIEND' OF MURIE AUDUBON

The annual cost of being an individual or family 'Friend' is a donation of \$10 or more.

Benefits include:

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Your generous donations support:

* MurieAudubon.org - our website * Local conservation efforts * Local Environmental Education

* WYOBIRDS email list server * Audubon Adventures * Annual Banquet

~~~~~ All of your funds are used locally here in Wyoming ~~~~~

Today's Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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Thank you for your support!

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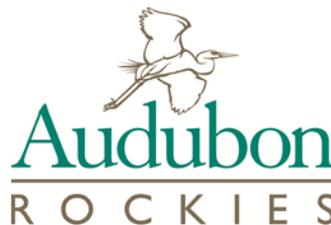
## MAS VISION STATEMENT

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

**Regional Office:** 106 N. College Ave., Suite 1, Fort Collins, CO 80524. Phone: 970-416-6931 (Contact number for staff)  
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## MAS MISSION STATEMENT

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

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Those who have not paid in one year or more should see “Expired” and a date of expiration on your mailing label, on the same line as your name. You will only receive one more issue after this one. If you feel this is in error, please contact Harry Martin (258-1255) to update details.

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