

MURIE AUDUBON'S
PLAINS & PEAKS

December 2020 VOL. 54 ISSUE 7
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DECEMBER 19, 2020

CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT



Join Murie Audubon Society for counting birds around Casper, Wyoming. Then participate in a Zoom evening data compilation.

UPCOMING EVENTS

December 19, Casper Christmas Bird Count
7pm via Zoom
January 1, Bates Hole Bird Count
Time & Locations TBD

SPECIAL FEATURES

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How Much Does A Hummingbird Weigh?

FROM THE PRESIDENT'S FIELD NOTES



Merry Christmas!

Hope this newsletter finds you well. I'm looking forward to meeting with you in person, but it's quite obvious we made a healthy decision to not meet in person this season.

Zoom general meetings seem to be going really well. It's been delightful to hear from folks that aren't necessarily local. Last month, we heard about Audubon Rockie's new vision for monitoring habitat along the North Platte River. I'm very excited about this project as our "Piggery" property could use some conservation efforts.

I'm also looking forward to the Christmas Bird Count, December 19th. We will collect data like we normally do, but we will be compiling data via a Zoom meeting.

May the winter birds bring you holiday cheer this time of year! Happy Holidays!

Jenny Edwards
MAS President

KID'S CORNER



The house sparrow (*Passer domesticus*) is a bird of the sparrow family Passeridae, found in most parts of the world. It is a small bird that has a typical length of 16 cm (6.3 in) and a mass of 24–39.5 g (0.85–1.39 oz). Females and young birds are colored pale brown and grey, and males have brighter black, white, and brown markings.

House sparrows sleep with the bill tucked underneath the scapular feathers. Outside of the reproductive season, they often roost communally in trees or shrubs. Much communal chirping occurs before and after the birds settle in the roost in the evening, as well as before the birds leave the roost in the morning.

The first of many successful introductions to North America occurred when birds from England were released in New York City, in 1852, intended to control the ravages of the linden moth.



Taken from: https://kids.kiddle.co/House_sparrow



FACTS ABOUT BIRDS

Most Hummingbirds Weigh Less Than A Nickel

Hummingbirds are incredibly lightweight. The average hummingbird is around 4 grams (one gram less than a nickel), while the smallest, the bee hummingbird, is closer to 1.6 grams, less than the weight of a penny. The largest member of the hummingbird family, meanwhile, is the aptly named giant hummingbird, which can get up to 24 grams—enormous for a hummingbird, but only equivalent to about a handful of loose change.

Bassian Thrushes Find Food By Farting

Worm-eating Bassian thrushes have been known to dislodge their prey from piles of leaves by directing their farts at them. The excretion of gas shifts the leaf-litter on the ground and apparently provokes worms to move around, revealing their location.

Ravens Are Great At Mimicking Human Speech And Sounds

While ravens in the wild are unlikely to pick up human language, in captivity they can become quite talkative. Some ravens are even better than parrots at mimicking human speech, not to mention sounds from the human world like car engines revving or toilets flushing. In the wild, meanwhile, ravens sometimes imitate other animals, mimicking predators like wolves or foxes to attract them to tasty carcasses they're unable to break open on their own.

Cardinals Like To Cover Themselves In Ants

Cardinals (along with several other bird species) sometimes cover themselves in crushed or living ants, smearing them over their feathers, or allowing living ants to crawl on them. While scientists still aren't sure what the purpose of "anting" is, some believe the birds use the formic acid secreted during their ant bath to help get rid of lice and other parasites.

Taken From: <https://www.mentalfloss.com/article/78996/15-amazing-facts-about-15-birds>

CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT IN THE COVID-19 ERA

DECEMBER 19, 2020

CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT



Join Murie Audubon Society for counting birds around Casper, Wyoming. Then participate in a Zoom evening data compilation.

Christmas Bird Count in the Covid-19 Era

The idea of the Christmas Bird Count (CBC) is to conduct a census of all birds within a designated circle that is 15 miles in diameter during a 24 hour period. The center of the Casper CBC circle is SW of the city of Casper off of Coates Road and was strategically located to sample the various types of habitat in the area. The Casper CBC has been conducted annually since January 2, 1949.

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, we will be taking the necessary precautions to keep all of our participants as safe as possible. These precautions include:

1. There will be no pre-count organizational meeting nor post-count compilation gathering.
2. Social distancing and/or masking will be observed.
3. Carpooling only within existing familiar or social groups.
4. Activities must comply with all current state and municipal COVID-19 guidelines.

All of these practices are familiar to all of us and things that we already observe.

The count will take place on Saturday December 19, 2020. A compilation Zoom meeting will be held that evening beginning at 6:30 PM. Join Zoom Meeting

<https://natronaschools.zoom.us/j/89431413535?pwd=T1JxaVFZK0RlV3RnOEtpcUZ3bHdlUT09>

Meeting ID: 894 3141 3535

Passcode: 144631

If you cannot participate in the Zoom meeting, we can make alternate ways to obtain the count data from you.

We will contact all of the usual participants to try to make sure that we do not have duplication of efforts. If you plan on participating in the Casper count, please contact Bruce Walgren (234-7455) or Stacey Scott (262-0055)

For the Bates Hole count to be conducted on January 1, 2021, please contact Charlie Scott (234-2512) or Stacey Scott (262-0055)



MURIE AUDUBON HAPPENINGS

As all of you know, the Coronavirus pandemic has altered how Murie Audubon has been conducting our monthly meetings. In the Spring, we canceled programs and board of directors meetings. These cancellations affected the Spring elections and we have been discussing the best way to proceed with elections. Current Board officers and members are as follows:

Officers with a 1 year term-

President: Jenny Edwards

Vice President: Larry Keffer

Treasurer: Stacey Scott

Secretary: Kim Grant

BOD with 2 year term-

Kelly Keenan

Luis Alza

Harry Martin

Sarah Burger

Zach Hutchinson

Brian Connolly

Bart Rea -Emeritus

+ 2 open positions

1 open position for a student appointment

Murie Audubon would like to further postpone elections until Spring 2021 while we figure out the best way to poll membership barring an in-person meeting. Currently, we are discussing sending postcards to paid members. We are seeking individuals interested in joining the Board, please contact one of the officers for further information.

Kim Grant

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.

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.

NOTICE TO MEMBERS OF MURIE NEWSLETTER RECIPIENTS

This is just a friendly reminder that per our newest bylaws, every membership expires September 30, 2020, and every year thereafter. Unless you have paid for years in advance, your membership expires September 30, every year until our bylaws change. You will only receive one more issue after the expiration date. If you feel this is in error, please contact Harry Martin 307-258-1255 to update details.

Please be patient if you have renewed your membership. It could take up to 60 days for the renewal to be updated in our database. A good reason to renew before your expiration date.

ABOUT MURIE AUDUBON

Please See: <https://murieaudubon.org/about/>

E-Mail: murie@murieaudubon.org

RENEW OR BECOME A REGULAR MEMBER OF MURIE AUDUBON FOR ONLY \$10

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