

MURIE AUDUBON'S
PLAINS & PEAKS

MARCH 2023 | VOL. 57 ISSUE 2

<http://www.murieaudubon.org> | Facebook @ Murie Audubon Society



UPCOMING EVENTS

- Murie's General Program** Mar 9th
- Zach's House** Mar 11th
- Bird ID Classes** Apr 18th

SPECIAL FEATURES

- Membership Renewal** pg 6

FIELD NOTES FROM THE PRESIDENT



Hello Friends!

This spring, Murie has had the opportunity to support several non-profit projects!

Most recently, Murie approved a grant to support equipment and bird seed at the Casper Mountain Science School. This school provides science opportunities to Natrona County k-12 students.

In addition, Murie supported NCHS students attending Teton Science School. These students worked on experiments and data collection in Grand Teton National Park.

This spring, Murie will be partnering with Edness Kimball Wilkins State Park for a habitat restoration project.

We are so excited to have the opportunity to support these fabulous projects and enriching our community.

Jenny Edwards

KIDS CORNER



Have you heard the Western Meadowlark this year?

Many folks regard the unmistakable sound of the Meadowlark's song as the arrival of spring here in Wyoming (WY). In fact, you are more likely to hear this bird before you see it as it blends in quite well with its open grassland habitat. These birds are often spotted singing on fence posts as shown in the picture right.

MARCH BIRD CHALLENGE

March's challenge is to find those birds that let us know spring is coming and get us through our dismal weather and spring snow storms.

- Killdeer
- California Gull
- Double-crested Cormorant
- Osprey
- Tree Swallow
- Mountain Bluebird
- Western Meadowlark
- Grackle

Good luck! Can't wait to see pictures and reports of your birds!



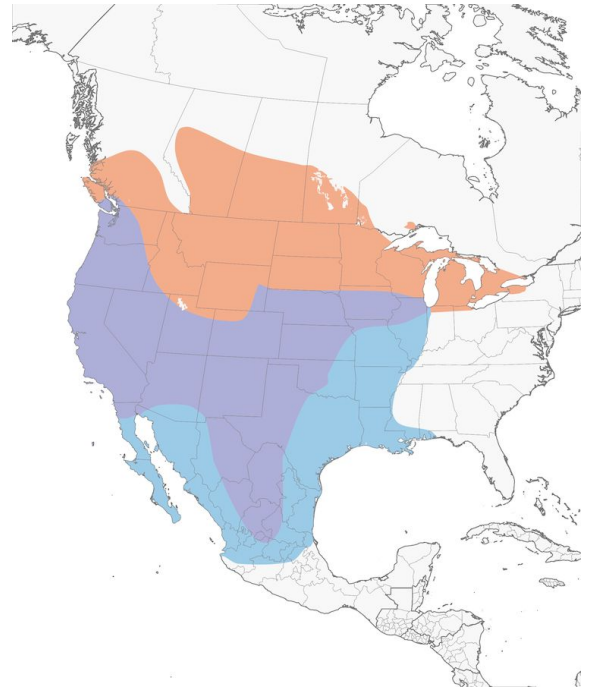
KIDS CORNER Continued

Being a grassland species, naturally the females make a ground nest to lay their eggs. It is important she makes a nest that blends in well with the habitat, as the eggs can be quite vulnerable on the ground. The parents will need to keep the eggs and chicks safe for several weeks before the offspring are ready to fledge. Like many grassland species, the Western Meadowlark's habitat can be compromised as native grasslands are converted for agriculture or housing development areas for example.

Because there is a *Western* Meadowlark, there must be an *Eastern* Meadowlark, right? Yes of course, and as one may assume their names are associated with their distributions in North America. Although their ranges overlap in areas of central United States, studies indicate the two species do not share their territories.

Lastly, let us not forget the Western Meadowlark is the WY state bird! Be sure to get out there and spot this iconic bird this season!

Kelly Keenan - information sourced from eBird



Distribution of the Western Meadowlark - eBird

BOOK CLUB

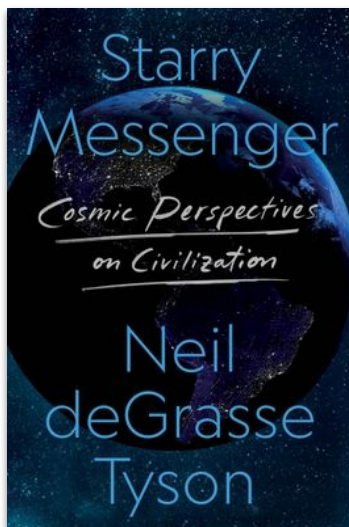
Starry Messenger: Cosmic Perspectives on Civilization

Neil deGrasse Tyson

******* 5 Stars Recommended**

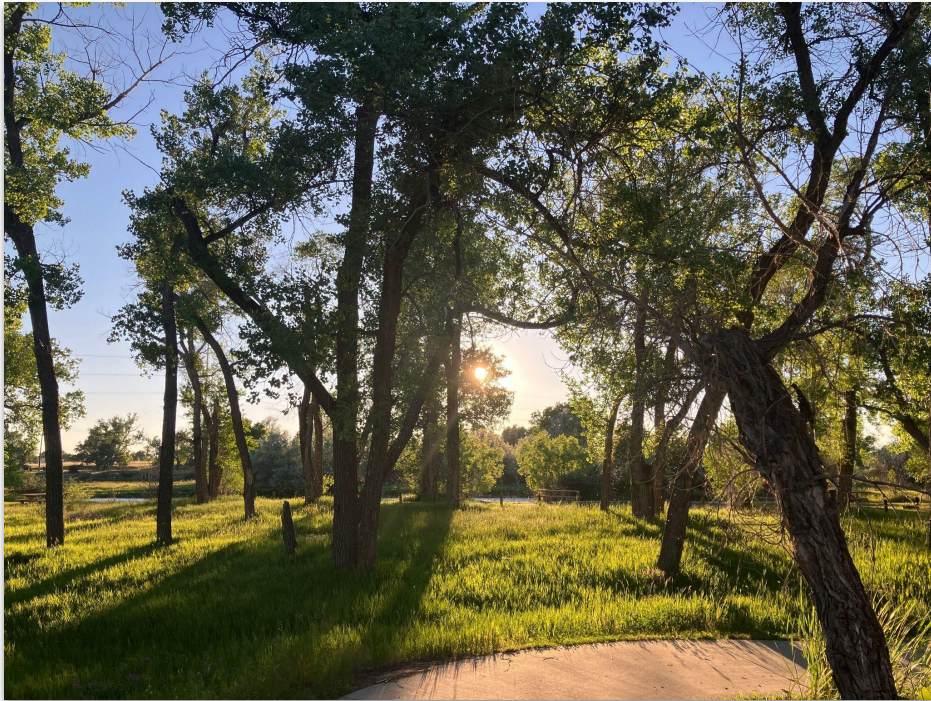
Another book by Neil! This book comes highly recommended. It combines space, politics, and philosophy. He gives us reminders to celebrate of what it means to be human. I listened to this book on audible, which is narrated by Neil himself.

Jenny Edwards



MURIE AUDUBON PRESENTS

EDNESS KIMBALL WILKINS STATE PARK: WHAT THE FUTURE HOLDS



Edness Kimball Wilkins State Park (known by most simply as EKW) located near one of the most populous cities in Wyoming, is very popular among outdoor enthusiasts. Audubon members flock there for birding opportunities, as well as a good place for an outdoor walk. Carlo Migliaccio is the superintendent at Edness Kimball Wilkins State Park and will be our guest speaker this month.

Users of EKW have no doubt seen changes in the last few years, from the removal of Russian Olive trees to the staging of pre-fab overnight cabins. Carlo reports that they are in the process of completing several projects started last year, and have a few others in the queue, which they are hoping to complete before December of this year. Plans are to complete several conservation-oriented projects, including renovations and replanting in Betty's Garden, replanting along the river, and the construction of a pollinator garden near the Mountain View shelter. There are also several recreational projects in the works, including the completion and opening of the overnight cabin facilities, archery range, and installation of lifejacket stands along the pond. Carlo's presentation will address the details of these projects, along with a brief history of the park, and a discussion of longer term plans for conservation and improvement.

This month we return to an in-person meeting and we will gather at the usual location at the Izaak Walton Clubhouse to participate. To take part, come to the Murie Audubon free talk on March 9, 2023, at 7 p.m., at the Izaak Walton Clubhouse, at 4205 Fort Caspar Road.

Bruce Walgren

EDNESS KIMBALL WILKINS STATE PARK FUNDRAISER

State Parks and Cultural Resources is planning our all-staff conference for the end of March, and we are trying something new this year: a lot of organizations like yours do a lot to help and partner with us, and we are trying to find a way to give our staff and leadership a way to give back. We are planning to hold a silent auction and raffle at our staff banquet on March 22nd, with the proceeds being evenly split between Murie Audubon and Platte River Veterans Fly-Fishing. The goal is to raffle and auction handmade items, so we are looking for crafts-people and artists willing to donate items.

MURIE'S SPRING FIELD TRIPS

Saturday, March 11 - We will meet at the Game and Fish parking lot at 11:00 AM to carpool to Zach Hutchinson's house to look at his feeders. Bring a sack lunch and we will watch his feeders for a couple of hours while we eat lunch. Because the snow has left so little space for parking, we will need to carpool.

In April - I will count Sage-grouse Leks at least 3 times. I can take a few people at a time to watch the strutting. I leave Casper about one and a quarter hours before sunrise in order to be at the Lek half an hour before sunrise. The roads are dirt, two-tracks so the ground has to be dry in order for me to make it to the Lek. Because of the weather limitations, I cannot schedule very far in advance, and sometimes the decision is made the night before. I can get back to town a little after 8:00. I also would like to go up by the Bates Creek Reservoir and see those leks, but the weather is much more of a problem at that elevation. Those trips will be longer, and in late April and early May. Contact me at 262-0055 if you want to join me. I will take people on a first come first serve basis.

Saturday, April 15 - We will meet at the Game at Fish Parking Lot at 9:00 AM for a trip to Goldeneye Reservoir. This should be early in the duck migration, and will depend on decent weather. We should be back by noon. Call me at 262-0055 if you think the weather looks iffy.

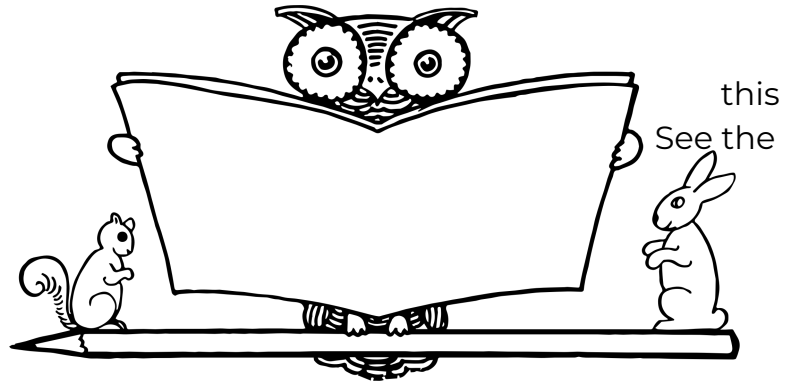
Stacey Scott

BIRD IDENTIFICATION CLASSES

Spring Bird ID Class with Luis Alza and Stacey Scott

Murie Audubon's spring Bird ID class will start Tuesday, April 18 at the Werner Wildlife Museum at 7:00, and will run for the next 4 Tuesdays with the last class May 16. We will have a field trip each Saturday to practice with actually identifying birds. There will also be additional Murie Field trips later in May and June which will cover different habitats. These classes will be standalone units, so just come to the ones you can make. There is no charge for these classes.

Stacey Scott is teaching 2 OLLI classes spring, one in April and one in late May. OLLI catalog for more information.



MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL

This is a friendly reminder that each September is our annual membership and renewal drive. All memberships expire on that date each and every year, so this is our big push to renew current members and to encourage visitors and guests to join.

We would love to have you as part of our education and conservation team. Features and benefits:

- Monthly Newsletter
- Education Programs
- Guest speakers
- Guided field trips
- Community projects
- Education Grants

You can be part of our citizen scientist efforts. You do not have to be a birder to join, enjoy, or take advantage of everything this site has to offer.

So, please, take a moment to sign up. The registration link is on our home page. We have on-line payment options for electronic payment, and of course, you can mail in payments using snail mail. As always, thank you for your continued support.

Harry
Murie Audubon Society
Membership Chair

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.

OPEN POSITIONS

We have a couple of Murie Audubon Society Chapter open volunteer positions for your consideration.

- Membership Chair – This position requires some knowledge of working with spreadsheets and working with other Board Members to update our membership database, recruit new members, and other duties related to membership.
- Webmaster/IT Manager – This position requires knowledge of WordPress and cPanel, updating and managing our website.

Experience desired, but not necessary. We can train you if you are interested and have a computer with Internet access. If interested, please send an email to murie@murieaudubon.org

These are volunteer positions only.

Harry

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



Today's Date: _____

\$10 One Year \$20 Two Years \$30 Three Years or electronic payment on our website.

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____ (Not shared with anyone – honest!)

Email: _____ (Again, not shared with anyone)

Please check: I want the Plains & Peaks newsletter delivered to the above address.

I want to save a tree and postage. DO NOT SEND ME SNAIL MAIL! I will download a digital copy of the Plains & Peaks Newsletter from <http://MurieAudubon.org> 😊

Please make checks payable to: Murie Audubon Society, PO Box 2112, Casper, WY 82602

Murie Audubon Society
P.O. Box 2112
Casper, WY 80602

NON-PROFIT ORG.
US POSTAGE PAID
PERMIT 165
CASPER, WY 82602

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

