

SAVE THE DATE!



PINT NIGHT AND HOLIDAY PARTY
December 19
5:00-8:00+ p.m.



FOR EVERY PINT SOLD FROM 6-8 P.M., BLACKSMITH WILL DONATE \$1 TO BITTERROOT BIRD ALLIANCE'S ASPIRATION FUND! THANK YOU, BLACKSMITH!

Blacksmith Brewery: 114 Main Street, Stevensville



be easily removed if needed. We will also provide people with science-based instructions for using the markers.



Photo by Kate Stone

My friend Beth from Sacajawea Audubon gave me this oil-based paint marker and the instructions for drawing vertical lines on my windows. I'm so happy to give it try!

Resources available for reducing home window collisions

By Kate Stone

Though skyscrapers in cities get a lot of attention, millions of birds die annually from window collisions in residential settings. If you feed birds, have trees and shrubs near your house, and/or have highly reflective windows, you likely contribute to this staggering number. Birds that hit windows often suffer concussions and internal injuries that may not be immediately evident, and they may fly off looking “just fine.”

Though I see friends and family making attempts at safer windows with decals or other deterrents, I rarely see these attempts at the recommended and well-studied spacing of markers every 2 to 4 inches. One simple solution is to make appropriately spaced vertical lines on the outside of your windows using a white oil-based marker. Bitterroot Bird Alliance has purchased a case of these markers that we will distribute to our members. These lines hold up well to weather and even gentle window washing, but can

Interested in using one of these markers? We'll have them available at our pint night at Blacksmith Brewing on December 19th and will also try to have them available at both the Stevensville and Hamilton Christmas Bird Counts. Or if you'd like to purchase one yourself, we are using a Sharpie white medium-point oil-based paint pen- #071641355583.

If you want to read more about science-based solutions window collisions, please take a look at the American Bird Conservancy's website on bird window strikes: <https://abcbirds.org/get-involved/bird-smart-%20glass/>

We thank our friends at Sacajawea Audubon for this idea and getting this project started!!



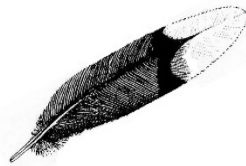
Photo by Kate Stone

I have one window that birds sometimes hit as they dart between my house and the garage. I used a yardstick and drew lines the appropriate 2 to 4 inches apart to break up the reflection. These lines are hardly visible from inside the house and the process took me less than five minutes.

Letter from the President

By Micki Long, BAS President

It's December, and, like many, I am taking stock of 2024; fortunately for you, in this letter I won't take stock of any aspects of my life outside of birding! I am revisiting both truly magnificent birds and birding adventures with truly magnificent friends! The appearance of a particular species in my yard usually makes me gasp, sometimes makes me yell, and always makes my heart leap: the American Goshawk. I have been lucky enough to see juveniles or adults in January, October, November, and December (including this week). Thanksgiving Day was graced with a juvenile Goshawk pursuing a Northern Flicker, right outside the window. A friend and I both gasped and, despite very full bellies, we leapt from the table to watch the drama from the window. Even my dog Tess jumped up on one of her birdwatching chairs to see if predator or prey would prevail. This time, the hawk was left perched in a nearby tree, and the flicker escaped into the woods. So far, at least when I've been watching, the Goshawk has engendered plenty



of alarm in the yard but has not succeeded in capturing a meal. Keep an eye to the sky, little birds!



Photo by Micki Long

Juvenile American Goshawk

Watching Goshawks, Sharp-shinned Hawks, Clark's Nutcrackers, Steller Jays, and other birds from my window or deck is usually a solitary experience. But Bitterroot Bird Alliance (BBA) and its partners have provided me with memorable birding adventures, primarily with other BBA members. Monitoring Peregrine Falcons with my Peregrine partner, under the auspices of Bitterroot Bird Alliance's Raptor Guardians and the Montana Peregrine Institute, has been exciting, sometimes even thrilling. While always aware of our presence, occasionally the Peregrines let us know, by cackling and flying over us, that we are a little too close (so we move). No matter how many times I hear the cackling and see the birds flying, even displaying, the air still feels electrified! Other great birding outings with BBA friends include the Christmas Bird Count, Shorebird Surveys, and informal hikes. This winter, put on your puffy jacket, snow pants, and maybe even Ice Trekkers, and then grab a friend and find some birds. See you out there!

I know that some of you don't like to attend Zoom meetings, which we have in the winter due to concerns about the safety of our members driving to and from meetings. The weather and elk or deer on the roads pose dangers. Once, as I was coming home from a winter meeting, a bear ran in front of my car! But we've got a great lineup of Zoom meetings this winter. In January, Kate Stone will talk about shorebird surveys; in February, we'll hear from Diana Tomback, a leading expert on Clark's Nutcrackers; and in March, Diane Boyd will discuss her life (and book) about her many years researching wolves. So even if you generally avoid Zooms, these meetings will be worth attending!



Photo by Micki Long

Female Peregrine Falcon

As in the past, we will not have a program meeting in December, but we will have a Pint Night/Holiday Party at Blacksmith Brewery on December 19th. See the flyer elsewhere in this newsletter as well as Christmas Bird Count gatherings. Happy Holidays, everyone!

Exciting News

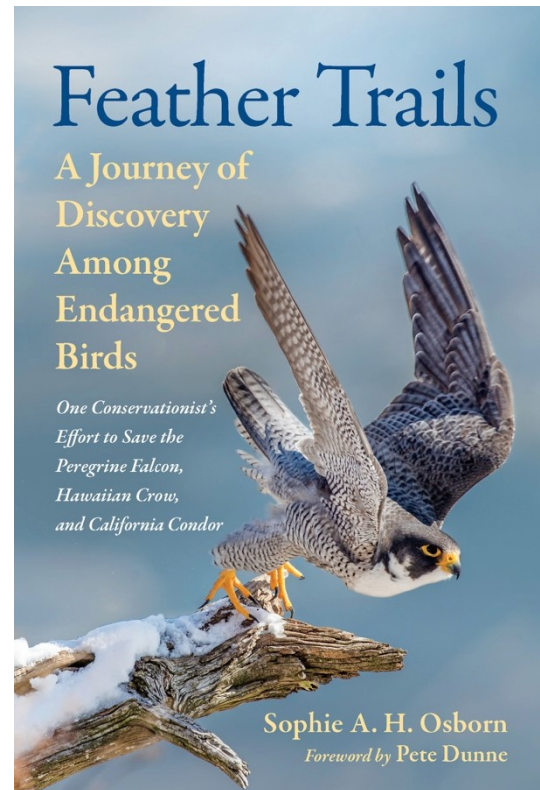
By Micki Long

At our November program meeting, Bitterroot Bird Alliance member Sophie Osborn talked about her book *Feather Trails: A Journey of Discovery Among Endangered Birds*, published last May. Sophie's presentation impressed everyone who attended the meeting. The American Birding Association's

Calendar of Events

- Monthly:** Beginner Bird Walk at Lee Metcalf NWR, 3rd Saturday of each month, Stevensville, MT 10AM-12PM.
- Dec 14:** Hamilton Christmas Bird Count, Teller Wildlife Refuge, 7:30AM.
- Dec 19:** Pint Night/Holiday Party, Blacksmith Brewery, 5-8PM.
- Dec 28:** Stevensville Christmas Bird Count, Stevensville Ranger District (Location TBA), 7:30AM.
- Jan15:** MT Audubon Grant submissions; see article for details.
- May30-Jun1:** Wings Across the Big Sky, Save the Date; Missoula. Details TBA.

podcast for December 5, 2024 focused on the Association's Birding Book Club's "Best of 2024." Two of the three reviewers chose Sophie's book at their number 1 birding book of the year! The reviewers were thoughtful and insightful in their comments praising Sophie's book. Here is a link to podcast (discussion of *Feather Trails* starts 46:25 minutes in): <https://www.aba.org/08-49-birding-book-club-best-of-2024/>



It's Almost Christmas Bird Count Time in the Bitterroot

By Larry Barnes, Hamilton CBC Compiler

There are two ways to participate. Each count circle is 15-miles in diameter and contains 177 square miles. Observers move about this circle, keeping track of their effort (distance covered, hours in the field) while recording the numbers of each species seen. Or, there is a feeder watch option for those who live within a count circle and prefer to keep a pane of glass between them and the birds. Either way, the day's observations are sent to the count compiler who combines the data and submits it to the National Audubon Society.

All ages and skill levels are welcome. If a beginner, you will be paired with a more experienced birder or birders. The groups gather at about 7:30 am with the intent of getting to the field by daylight about 8:00 am. The Hamilton group honors a 37-year-old tradition by returning to the Teller Barn for a lunch break featuring homemade chili and Oreos, and of course some delectable Christmas goodies. We aim to enjoy our common interest in nature together while searching for birds in the dead of winter. If this sounds like fun, call us for details.

The dates, meeting locations, and contact persons for the three local Christmas Bird Counts are:

Hamilton, December 14, Teller Education Barn, Corvallis, Larry Barnes 208-471-8297

Stevensville, December 28, location TBA, Deb Goslin

Save the date for the 2025 Wings Across the Big Sky Birding Festival

Though next summer seems far away, we're already hard at work planning the next Wings Across the Big Sky Birding Festival!

The festival will be held in Missoula, May 30 – June 1 2025. Montana Audubon is partnering with local chapter Five Valleys Audubon Society to host the festival, which will feature local field trips, a riveting keynote speaker, and engaging presentations. We're excited to share more details as soon as they're finalized!

More information coming soon, and keep an eye out for registration brochures in March 2025.



Montana Audubon's Fall 2024 newsletter is here!

In this issue we share updates on our latest work, including:

- Celebrating permanent protection for the Owen Sowerwine Property
- A banner year for Black Swift monitoring
- 2025 Legislative Preview
- The Montana Audubon Center's partnership with Indian Education For All

And more!

Read the PDF version on the Montana Audubon website: <https://mtaudubon.org/fall-2024-newsletter/>

Wildlife Grant Application Period Now Open

Since 1996, Montana Audubon has awarded grants to organizations in support of research, education projects, and other activities that focus on the conservation, enhancement and public appreciation of Montana's wildlife and natural communities.

More information, guidelines, and the application form can be found on our website:

<https://mtaudubon.org/apply-2025-audubon-wildlife-fund-grants/>



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Chapter Only Membership

The Bitterroot Bird Alliance Only Membership is \$15/year. These members will be supporting local chapter activities, receive the full color e-newsletter, and enjoy Chapter benefits. To join as a Chapter Only Member, complete this form.

Name: _____
Address: _____
City: _____
State: _____ Zip: _____
Email: _____

Send this application with \$15 to:

BITTERROOT BIRD
ALLIANCE



Bitterroot Bird Alliance
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NATIONAL AUDUBON SOCIETY MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION



Renew or Sign up
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Audubon.org