

NO MEMBERSHIP MEETING IN MARCH

There will be no Last Chance Audubon membership meeting in March. The next membership meeting will be held on Monday, April 19. Please see the April newsletter for details.

NATURAL HISTORY LECTURE SERIES

This is a reminder that every March LCAS sponsors a lecture series on a topic of general interest. This year the theme is *Celebrating One Hundred Years in Glacier National Park*. For the past century Americans have enjoyed watching the diverse wildlife in the park. Every Thursday in March at 6:30 pm. the public is invited to the Montana Historical Society to hear talks about the natural history of the "Crown of the Continent," and have an opportunity to see a major exhibit on Glacier in the lobby of the Historical Society at 225 N. Roberts in Helena. These talks are free and open to the public.

Thursday, March 4, Steve Gniadek, a recently retired Glacier NP biologist will provide a visual overview of park wildlife, some history of wildlife research and management in the Park, an overview of some of the current challenges to managing Park wildlife, and a glimpse of some the Glacier's iconic species.

March 11, Dave Shea, another retired biologist of 35 years will discuss the eagles of Glacier and his documentation of their habitat and natural history while collaborating with Riley McClelland, a lifelong student of bald eagles in Glacier.

March 18, Dan Fagre, research ecologist at the Northern Rocky Mountain Science Center in GNP, will discuss the impact of climate change on the glaciers and animals of the park. As ecologist for the Center, Fagre has monitored the effects of climate variability since 1991.

March 25, Chris Peterson, editor of *Glacier Park Magazine* and former editor of the *Hungry Horse New*, will share his experience hiking the Park

trails during the summer of 2009 and documenting his journey with both a digital camera and a 1910 vintage camera in a presentation entitled *100 Days in Glacier*.

BIRDING CLASS THIS SPRING

If you are interested in birds and would like to learn more about them, or if you've wanted to take up birding but don't know where to start, join Last Chance Audubon for a beginning birding class this spring. We'll discuss the basics of birding and bird identification and spend some time in the field practicing.

We will meet at St. Paul's Methodist Church for two classroom sessions on Thursday, April 29, and Thursday, May 6, from 7:00 to 8:30 pm. Field trips will be held on Saturday, May 1, at the Regulating Reservoir--this is International Migratory Bird Day--and Saturday, May 8, in and around Helena. We ask for a \$15.00 enrollment fee to cover costs.

Spring is just around the corner. Many migratory birds will be back in Montana in the coming weeks, and we can all begin to enjoy the beauty and diversity of birds once again.

If you want to attend the class, please call Jo Luce, 443-6640, to sign up. We'll try to limit class size to 20 people.

INSIDE:

- **Some Notes on George Bird Grinnell ...**
p. 2
- **LCAS Field Trip Opportunities ...** p. 3
- **Other Coming Events and Reminders ...**
p. 3

GRANT FUNDS AVAILABLE THROUGH LCAS HABITAT PROTECTION FUND

Last Chance Audubon is pleased to announce a **\$2,000 grant** to individuals, conservation groups, public agencies, and schools in Lewis & Clark, Broadwater, Jefferson, and Meagher counties to promote the protection or enhancement of habitat
(continued on next page)

(continued from previous page)

that has or could have significant value for birds and other wildlife. For the past 12 years the chapter has been offering grants for habitat projects throughout the area, and has funded numerous successful grants, such as funding of the replanting of fire-damaged Spring Meadow Lake State Park.

To apply for this year's \$2,000 grant please submit a statement of the work proposed; an explanation of how it will enhance the habitat; a plan to evaluate the effectiveness of the planned work; a

timeline; explain how the project will benefit more than one species; and a detailed budget (not to exceed three pages). The applications will be reviewed by the three members of the LCAS Habitat Protection committee. Applications should be sent to LCAS, Habitat Protection, P.O. Box 924, Helena, MT. 59624, no later than **April 1, 2009**. The committee will make its decision by **April 15th**.
--Brian Shovers

NOTES ON GEORGE BIRD GRINNELL

George Bird Grinnell spent his boyhood in Audubon Park on the Hudson River, where he attended a school taught by Lucy Audubon, daughter-in-law of John James Audubon.

In 1874 he accompanied George Armstrong Custer's Black Hills expedition as a naturalist, but declined a similar appointment in 1875 with the Little Big Horn Expedition.

In 1875 Grinnell served as naturalist and mineralogist on an expedition to Montana and newly established Yellowstone National Park. Expedition reports included an attachment by Grinnell documenting the poaching of bison, deer, elk, and antelope, and led to his publication of many magazine articles regarding conservation, protection of the endangered bison, and the American West in general. He lobbied for congressional support for the bison, and the passage in 1894 of the National Park Protective Act led to protection of the remaining 200 wild bison in Yellowstone. By then it was almost too late for the species, but Grinnell's actions led to further efforts by the Department of the Interior to increase bison numbers, and ultimately survival of the species.



From 1876 to 1911 Grinnell was editor of *Forest and Stream* magazine. He published numerous articles, essays and books on his study of the northern plains and plains Indians.

In 1886, appalled by the wanton slaughter of birds that he saw around him, Grinnell decided to create an organization devoted to protection of wild birds and their eggs. As a boy he read John James Audubon's *Ornithological Biography*, and he didn't have to look far for the organization's namesake. Within a year the early Audubon Society had 39,000 members.

In 1885 Grinnell discovered the glacier in Montana that bears his name. He continued exploring the region, and in 1892 he asked the editor of *Century* magazine if he would be interested in an article about the St. Mary country, stating, "The scenery . . . is wonderfully grand. . . . and some day I hope may be set aside as a National Park." This article, entitled "The Crown of the Continent," was not published until 1900. The first bill proposing creation of Glacier National Park was introduced in the U.S. Senate in 1907. Grinnell lobbied members of Congress for the bill's passage and urged readers of *Forest and Stream* to do the same. A bill finally passed, and President William Howard Taft signed it on May 11, 1910.

--Joyce Beckes

The steps which led to the establishment of the Glacier National Park have already been forgotten by most people. That, after all, is not important. The great thing is that this beautiful region has been saved for the public.

--George Bird Grinnell, 1914

LCAS FIELD TRIPS

Although most of us look for birds year round, it is always exciting to hear and see the first birds each spring and anticipate seeing more as the season unfolds. You'll enhance your chances to see more birds by attending some of the field trips our chapter sponsors each spring.

LCAS can always use new trip leaders and new ideas for field trips. Please give serious thought to leading a small group to an area that you've enjoyed, or would like to explore with others. Remember: You do not have to be an "ace" birder to lead a trip. Your responsibility is only to choose a location, receive a few phone calls, and get the participants into the field via carpooling. It's a fun and rewarding endeavor. **So if you have an idea for a trip, please contact Jim Greene, 495-9270 or greenevogt@imt.net.**

OTHER COMING EVENTS & REMINDERS

March 18-21, Kearney, Nebraska - The 40th annual Rivers and Wildlife Celebration. Witness the migration of over half a million sandhill cranes and millions of waterfowl and other birds through central Nebraska. Registration materials available at www.nebraska.audubon.org.

Wednesday March 24, 7:00 p.m. Kelsey Chapter, Montana Native Plant Society: Loren Bahls will present "Exploring the Little World of Diatoms: Montana's Smallest Native Plants." Loren will explain why diatoms are plants, even though they don't have leaves, stems, roots or flowers, and why they are more closely related to flowering plants (and to people!) than they are to bacteria and other microbes. He will explain why diatoms are important, both functionally and from the standpoint of biodiversity and will discuss some current floristic work he's doing in Glacier National Park and at Indian Meadows Research Natural Area. Loren will bring a microscope and some slides so attendees can see some diatoms first hand. Free in the large meeting room at the Lewis and Clark Library.

April Newsletter Deadline: Please submit April newsletter items by Thursday, April 1. Thanks!


Earth Day is April 22, 2010.

International Migratory Bird Day is May 1. See the April newsletter for details.

Audubon's Annual Bird Festival: Wings Across the Big Sky - June 4-6, in Missoula. See <http://mtaudubon.org> for details.

Be sure to check out the updated LCAS website at www.lastchanceaudubon.org.

Unique original art & gifts by Montana artists



Featuring art by
Jane Shull Beasley

Mon-Sat 9:30am-6pm
Wed until 8pm
Sundays 11am-4pm

Birds & Beasleys 

70 S. Park Ave.,
Helena, MT 59601
406-449-0904
www.birdsandbeasleys.com

GREAT BACKYARD BIRD COUNT: The GBBC took place February 12-15. As of March 1, 96,636 checklists had been submitted, with 599 species observed, and 11,166,534 individual birds counted.



Last Chance Audubon Society promotes understanding, respect and enjoyment of birds and the natural world through education, habitat protection and environmental advocacy.

LAST CHANCE AUDUBON SOCIETY
PO BOX 924
HELENA MT 59624

Non-Profit Org.
US Postage
PAID
Helena, MT 59601
Permit #29



LAST CHANCE AUDUBON SOCIETY			
Officers:			
Secretary Brian Shovers	443-6640	sholace@bresnan.net	
Treasurer Dan Sullivan	443-4229		
Board of Directors:			
Bob Martinka	449-3313		
Don Skaar	442-3254		
Coburn Currier		ccurrier@mt.gov	
Lorna Milne	443-7162		
Martha Vogt	495-9270		
Committee Chairs/Contacts			
Birdathon	Jo Lace	443-6640	
Birdseed Sale	Sue Jackson/Sandy Shull	443-4486/449-0904	
Website: www.lastchanceaudubon.org ; Contacts: Birdseed - Birds & Beasleys, 449-0904; Montana Audubon - 443-3949/ www.mtaudubon.org . Non-members may receive the newsletter for \$5.50 per year. Send check to LCAS, PO Box 924, Helena 59624.			
Christmas Count	Sue Newell/Cedron Jones	442-8142/442-1271	
Circulation	Sam Sperry/Joyce Beckes	458-8170	
Conservation	Brian Shovers	443-6640	
Education	vacant		
Field Trip	Jim Greene	495-9270/ greenevogt@imt.net	
Habitat Protection	Drake Barton	449-6586	
Membership	Sara Toubman	442-1271	
Nat. Hist. Series	Don Skaar	442-3254	
Newsletter	Joyce Beckes	458-8170/ samsper@mt.net	
Program	Sara Toubman	442-1271	
Publicity	Jim Greene	495-9270	
Silent Auction	Sandy Shull/Jo Lace	449-0904/443-6640	
Website	Christian Frazza	cfrazza@carroll.edu	

MEMBERSHIP REPORT from Sara Toubman
Please welcome the following members. NAS New: Barbara Bergum, Amy Skinner, Karen St. George, Richard Juntunen, Sandi Johansen, Jim Erickson, Joan Elhart, George Oberst, Dennis Zeiler, and Leslie Thomas. **NAS Renewals:** Janet Ellis, Dolores Walter, Robert Schleicher, and Ellen Taylor. **LCAS New/Renewals:** Sandy Shull, Jane Beasley, Hugh Zachheim, Kirk Eakin, Fran Penner-Ray, Eric Eggen, Gary Grzbielski, Sue Bennett, Barb Belt/Jim Emerson, Bob Champion, David Slaughter, Juanita Bray, Constance Enzweiler, Patty/Stephen Turner, Jane Anthony, Carla Wambach, Cheryl Cope, Bill/Joyce Kronholm, Janice Miller, Berma Saxton, and Les Pederson.

Last Chance Audubon Society
Membership Form

Name _____

Address _____

City/State/Zip _____

Phone _____ E-mail _____

Please send your \$15 check and form to Last Chance Audubon Society, PO Box 924, Helena, MT 59624. All contributions are tax deductible.