

February 2013
Newsletter



PRAIRIE FALCON

Missouri Breaks Audubon Chapter Newsletter

Thursday

February 21st

**First United Methodist
Church**

Media Center

117 N. Central Ave

Board Meeting

6:30 pm

Regular Meeting

7:30 pm

Presenter:

Anne Lewis

"Discovery Center Update"

Bird of the Month

Charles Sisk

THIS MONTH:

The Great Backyard Bird Count (from GFP news)

The Great Backyard Bird count is happening from February 15-18. Millions of novice and accomplished bird watchers can make their love of nature count for science and for the future during the 16th annual count, led by the National Audubon Society, the Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology and Bird Studies Canada.

Last year there were 306 checklists from 61 locations around the state. There were 108 species accounted for throughout the state. The most commonly reported birds were black-capped chickadee, dark-eyed junco, American goldfinch, house sparrow, and downy woodpecker. The most numerous species reported by South Dakota counters were the Canada goose, cackling goose, mallard, American goldfinch, and house sparrows.

Rapid City counters submitted the most checklists, followed by Vermillion, Sioux Falls and Pierre. Pierre birders reported 65 species, the highest number in the state.

You can view a series of short and helpful instructional videos at the Cornell Lab of Ornithology's website:

<http://www.allaboutbirds.org/NetCommunity/page.aspx?pid=1053>

South Dakota Game, Fish, and Parks has a free, color guide to backyard birds that you can request at the following website:

<http://gfp.sd.gov/wildlife/critters/birds/default.aspx>

During the count, bird watchers tally up birds for as little as 15 minutes, or for as long as they like, keeping track of the highest number of each bird species they see together at one time. People are encouraged to report birds from public lands and local parks and from their backyards.

Participants enter their numbers online at <http://www.birdsource.org/gbbc> and can explore sightings maps, lists, and charts as the count progresses. There is no fee to participate in the Great Backyard Bird Count.

MISSOURI BREAKS
AUDUBON CHAPTER

National Audubon Society
Box 832, Pierre, SD 57501

Established 1978

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Doug Backlund, *Christmas Count*

Dave Johnson, *Membership*

Doug Backlund, *Field Trip*

Mafia Birds:

Jeff Hoover, a scientist with the Illinois Natural History Survey, found that cowbird parasitism was thriving in the Cache River watershed. In 1993, nearly half of bird nests were parasitized by cowbirds. Hoover and colleagues started researching prothonotary warblers nesting success and tried to increase success by removing cowbird eggs. The adult cowbirds would return and brake warbler eggs and destroy the nests. The abundance of cowbirds was attributed to woodland habitat fragmentation. After a decade of restoration work, almost 37,000 acres have been restored to forest. Cowbird parasitism has decreased to 21 percent. (Nature Conservancy: 2012 Issue 4)

Link to the article:

<http://magazine.nature.org/features/the-mafia-birds.xml>

Upcoming Events

- Great Back Yard Bird Count: February 15-18, 2013
- SDOU Spring Meeting @ Wrangler Inn, Mobridge, SD: May 17-19, 2013

Be Green — Get this newsletter online

As a member of the National Audubon Society in Hughes and Stanley counties, you receive a copy of this newsletter as part of your membership. New mailing regulations require a different format and sticky tags to support machine readability at the post office. This adds to our handling time for paper copies of the newsletter.

If you would like to receive this newsletter by e-mail instead of hard copy (saving trees, postage, handling, and trash), send your e-mail address to info@MissouriBreaksAudubon.org. We won't share your address with anyone, and you can unsubscribe at any time. Of course, if you don't want the hard-copy either, let us know and we'll take care of that, too.