

Nature Mapping Newsletter June 2015

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- **JH Bird and Nature Club - June 9**
- **Mountain Lions - June 18**
- **Cache Creek Flower Foray - June 20**
- **Raptor Fest - June 21**
- **Fisheries Management - June 25**

Plant Community Corner: Aspen – Susan Marsh

In Jackson Hole, plant communities are complex and grade into one another, so it's not easy to draw a circle on a map and say, there—that's grassland, sagebrush steppe, or some other name we've given it. In every mapped plant community, anomalies crop up, and that's what keeps it interesting. Northerly aspects are cloaked in forest while dry, south-facing slopes support sagebrush and grass. Aspen fills in the margins to create a palette of vegetation types. Together they are the landscape we know. Of interest at this moment, when bright lime-green sets the mountainsides aglow, is quaking aspen, *Populus tremuloides*.

More than a tree, aspen might be better thought of as a vast underground network of roots and shoots, resulting in stands of up to several acres that are all the same individual plant. Stems age and die and others sprout in their places, thus perpetuating the aspen clone for centuries.

In our current semi-arid climate, the millions of seeds produced by an aspen each year rarely find conditions that favor their survival, so the clones' ability to sprout is what keeps the species going. Cache Creek, Shadow Mountain, Bryan Flat and Munger Mountain are excellent places to see large stands of aspen. Aspens provide habitat and food for many birds and mammals. Some of the birds currently visible in aspen stands are the following:

- House Wren
- Red-naped Sapsucker
- Yellow Warbler
- Orange-crowned Warbler
- Black-headed Grosbeak
- Tree Swallow

- Green-tailed Towhee

Photographic Contributions by Nature Mappers

Nature Mappers often have a camera handy to catch interesting observations. Here are a few photographs we have received these past few weeks:

Rose-breasted Grosbeak (male adult) – by Gigi Halloran May 20 – This is a rare bird for JH. Its typical range is central and eastern U.S., not Wyoming!

Feeder bird pictures taken by Susan Patla in May:

Black-headed Grosbeak (male adult) is a fully western bird frequently being seen now.

Red Crossbill (first year male) – Twisted bills are designed to pry open conifer cones.

Cassin's Finch – female – note streaking on breast, a bit of yellowish wash on face and a pale eyebrow, and notched tail. Heavy bill helps ID it as a finch.

Joan Lucas reported two Saw-whet Owl fledglings in her garden off Village Road.

April 2015 Data – Paul Hood

Total Observers: 41

Most Observations: Susan Marsh (99) Louise Haberfeld (67)

Observations

Birds:	398 observations	87 species	1338 individuals
Mammals:	149 observations	22 species	1379 individuals
Amphibians:	23 observations	1 species	96 individuals
Snakes:	1 observation	1 species	1 individual
Total:	571 observations	111 species	2814 individuals

Projects: Backyard 210 ; Casual Observations 355; Osprey 6; Total 571

Notes: April arrivals into the Valley included Broad-tailed and Calliope Hummingbirds, Green-tailed Towhee, Long-billed Curlew, Osprey, Red-naped Sapsucker, Sandhill Crane, Vesper Sparrow, Western Meadowlark, and White Pelican, to name a few. Remarkably we had more observations submitted for elk (44) than for moose (30)!

Nature Mapper Engagement

Deb Patla, trained 17 nature mappers on March 30 in the identification and ecology of six amphibian and four reptile species recorded in Teton County. Already we have surpassed last year's number of observations! We encourage everyone to record amphibians and reptiles. Go to our website for a handy guide:

<http://www.naturemappingjh.org/content/doc/Project%20Pages/Phib%20NM%20Training%20-%20DP-%202015.pdf>

We hosted a Certification Training for over a dozen new Nature Mappers on April 27. *Ben Wise*, biologist with Wyoming Game and Fish, aided in the identification and biology of ungulates. Already over half the class have contributed observations. Thank you!

We hope to host [another training soon](#). If you know of someone interested, please have them contact Frances frances@jhwildlife.org so she can inform them of the next date.

Three Nature Mapping Community Field Trips attracted both long-time and new Nature Mappers who learned which birds and mammals to look for in different habitats. Highlights in sage-steppe/grasslands included Greater Sage Grouse, Western Meadowlark, Vesper and Brewer's Sparrows. In wetlands: 8 Sandhill Cranes were feeding together; a huge beaver, a small muskrat, and a raccoon worked along the shores; well over a dozen male Yellow Warblers vied for territory, and Barrow's Goldeneye, Green-wing Teal, Cinnamon Teal, and American Wigeon were seen in pairs. In the aspen groves we spied several nesting house wrens, nesting Red-naped Sapsuckers, as well as a warbling vireo and a Wood Peewee. Green-tailed Towhees were observed all three trips. We thank *Bernie McHugh* for providing his birding expertise with ad hoc assistance from Dave Lucas, Jean Lawrence, Joe Lojar, and others.

More Volunteer Opportunities

Nature Mappers Wanted for Kestrel Research -- Biologists with Craighead Beringia South (CBS) have started a multi-year research project focused on identifying population trends, survival rates, migration routes, wintering sites, and habitat selection of American Kestrels in Jackson Hole and they need your help!

You can get involved in the project by submitting the location of any kestrel you see to Nature Mapping Jackson Hole, volunteering with CBS to help monitor nest boxes or natural cavities, or by putting up a kestrel nest box on your property.

To get a kestrel nest box, you can build your own by following simple instructions (found here: <http://www.peregrinefund.org/docs/pdf/misc/2011-kestrel-nest-box-instructions.pdf>), nest boxes can be purchased at the Teton Raptor Center (call [307-203-2551](tel:307-203-2551) for more information), or contact CBS and we'll make sure you get what you need.

If you already have a kestrel nest box up on your property, we'd love to hear about it and make sure the information from any birds using your box is entered in the American Kestrel Partnership's international nesting kestrel database.

For more information on volunteer opportunities, questions about the project or to inform us of an existing nest box, email ross@beringiasouth.org or call CBS at [307-734-0581](tel:307-734-0581).

Be sure to sign up for:

Snake River Floats – Sunday mornings, June – October – Contact: Anya Tyson, Project Coordinator: anyamtyson@gmail.com or cell [719-231-2450](tel:719-231-2450).



Wildlife Expeditions Ride Along – Wednesdays in summer: half- or full-day. Teton Science Schools offers this special opportunity for Nature Mappers to join their tours led by their expert guides for free in exchange for mapping the wildlife seen by the group along the way. Contact: Jared Baecker at jared.baecker@tetonscience.org with cc: Frances frances@jhwildlife.org.

Upcoming Programs

Wednesday, June 3, 6-7:30 p.m. – Celebrate Crowdfunding the Bert Raynes Documentary, National Museum of Wildlife Art. Free. In conjunction with the Charture Institute, JenTen Productions is producing a half-hour film about local conservation icon and Jackson Hole News &

Guide columnist Bert Raynes, highlighting the Citizen Scientist Nature Mapping program he helped launch.

To celebrate the conclusion of what we hope will be a successful Indiegogo crowdfunding effort to raise funds for the film, The National Museum of Wildlife Art is hosting a celebration -- of our fundraising effort, of conservation in Jackson Hole, and most of all of Bert -- and we hope you can join us. The reception will feature light appetizers, a cash bar and special video "treats." Images from "Birds of Sage and Scree," a literary and artistic collaboration between Bert and the late artist Greg McHuron, will be on display, and the Teton Raptor Center will be on hand with a special feathered guest.

Tuesday, June 9, 6 p.m. Monthly Jackson Hole Bird and Nature Club Meeting. Teton County Library, Ordway Auditorium B. Come gather with other nature enthusiasts for our monthly meeting with special guest speaker. Topic to be determined.

Thursday, June 18, 6:30 (BBQ at 5:30) - Altruism in Mountain Lions. Dr. Mark Elbrock will be the first speaker for the weekly Harlow Summer Series in the Berol Lodge, AMK Ranch near Leeks Marina, north end of GTNP. Open to the public, no reservations required. The series is sponsored by the University of Wyoming and the National Park service. BBQ for only a \$5.00 donation. For more info: <http://www.uwyo.edu/uwnps>

Saturday, June 20, 9 a.m.- noon – Cache Creek Flower Walk with Susan Marsh, hosted by Teton Plants, a chapter of the WY Native Plant Society. Susan Marsh, author of several books and hiking guides and a denizen of Cache Creek, will lead us up the old road looking for many flowers in bloom. Meet at the main parking lot, at the end of Cache Creek Drive. For more program information and "What's in Bloom?" postings go to www.tetonplants.org If you wish to be on our email list contact: tetonplants@gmail.com

Sunday, June 21, RaptorFest 1-5 p.m. - Join Owly the Great Horned Owl, Gus the Golden Eagle, and many other live raptors at Teton Raptor Center for an afternoon of live music, kids' activities, learning opportunities, and live raptors!

Event runs from 1 – 5pm at the historic Hardeman Barns in Wilson, WY. Bike, walk, or take the free START bus from the Stilson lot. Leave the dogs at home, this event is for the birds! \$5/person or \$10/family.

Thursday, June 25, 6:30 p.m. (BBQ at 5:30) - History of Fisheries Management in the Western US with Notes on the Hoback River and Jackson Lake. Diana Miller, Wyoming Game and Fish Department, Jackson. Summer Series in the Berol Lodge, AMK Ranch near Leeks Marina, north end of GTNP. Open to the public, no reservations required. The series is sponsored by the University of Wyoming and the National Park service. BBQ for only a \$5.00 donation. For more info: <http://www.uwyo.edu/uwnps>

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Nature Mapping is a program of the Jackson Hole Wildlife Foundation and is sponsored by the Meg and Bert Raynes Fund and other generous contributors.

Donations can be mailed to:
Jackson Hole Wildlife Foundation
P.O. Box 8042
Jackson, WY 32002
or contact Cory Hatch cory@jhwildlife.org
Thank you!

6.2.15-final- fhc

JACKSON HOLE



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This message was sent to hood0026@gmail.com from:

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