



NEWS RELEASE



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United States Department of the Interior ~ Fish and Wildlife Service
National Bison Range, 58355 Bison Range Road, Moiese, MT 59824

Migrate to the National Bison Range for Bird Day

Celebrate International Migratory Bird Day 2013 at the National Bison Range on Saturday, May 11. This year's theme focuses on life cycles and details all aspects of a migratory bird's life, from nesting and migration to breeding and raising young. Most importantly, it addresses the need for conservation throughout a bird's life cycle.

Habitat conditions in one season may affect the survival and nesting success of birds in another. Winter habitats are just as important as nesting sites, and their quality influences nesting success. Stopover sites, the places where birds rest and refuel during migration, are also critical, and are especially important for birds flying long distances.

As usual, the BIG event of Bird Day is the opening of Red Sleep Mountain Drive for the summer season, weather and road conditions permitting, of course. This is a 19-mile, one-way gravel road which climbs 2,000 feet to the high point of the Range. Because it travels through a variety of habitats, including grassland and forest, the scenic drive is a great place to see a broad spectrum of birds which have migrated back for the nesting season. Also, look for abundant wildlife and wildflowers and expect to catch a glimpse of baby bison among the herds.

For those who are new to birdwatching, or those just wanting to dust off the winter cobwebs, the Refuge will conduct a Beginning Bird Walk early on Saturday morning. The group will take an easy stroll around the Nature Trail to see which birds have completed their migration to return for the season. Call the office at 406/644-2211 extension 207 to register and get meeting place and time.

Other walks and activities may be added at a later date so check out our new website at www.fws.gov/refuge/national_bison_range. All of these trips have limited space so **preregistration is required**.

We'll have a Migration Challenge course set up along the Grassland Trail at the Visitor Center so you can try your hand (wing!) at migrating. Additional activities for the day include special bird video showings, trivia contests, tips and tidbits, coloring pages, and free posters.

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The Refuge and its scenic drives will open at 6:30 a.m. and the Visitor Center opens from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Visitors coming in the evening will need to start Red Sleep Mountain Drive by 6 p.m. to complete the trip before the Refuge closes as dark. All Bird Day events are free but fees are charged for the scenic drives.

International Migratory Bird Day celebrates the incredible journeys of migratory birds between their breeding grounds in North America and their wintering grounds in Mexico, Central, and South America. For more information about migratory birds and about events happening throughout the nation, you can check the website at <http://www.birdday.org/birday>.

The mission of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is working with others to conserve, protect, and enhance fish, wildlife, plants, and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people. We are both a leader and trusted partner in fish and wildlife conservation, known for our scientific excellence, stewardship of lands and natural resources, dedicated professionals, and commitment to public service. For more information on our work and the people who make it happen, visit www.fws.gov. Connect with the Service's Mountain-Prairie Region via our Facebook page at <http://www.facebook.com/USFWSMountainPrairie>, follow our tweets at <http://twitter.com/USFWSMtnPrairie>, download photos from our Flickr page at <http://www.flickr.com/photos/51986662@N05>, and watch our YouTube Channel at <http://www.youtube.com/usfws>.

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