

**Welcome** to the Averill's Viking Creek Wetland Preserve and the *Living Wetlands Interpretive Nature Trail*. The 28.82 acre Preserve was gifted to the Whitefish Lake Institute by the Dan Averill family in 2009, as part of the Viking Creek Development proposal. Our goal in making the trail available to the public is to share the history, science, and beauty of the wetland, and to provide a glimpse into the lives of the wildlife with which we share this habitat. This wetland is an integral part of the Whitefish Lake Watershed which is nestled within the larger Flathead Lake Watershed.

**Flathead Audubon Society** volunteers helped identify the wetland bird species that are found in this guide. The Flathead Audubon Society is a local chapter of the National Audubon Society. For more information go to [flatheadaudubon.org](http://flatheadaudubon.org). We are grateful to Flathead Audubon for their efforts in conservation and education throughout the Flathead and for their financial assistance in printing this guide.

**What to expect in and around the Flathead Lake Watershed**

**Spring** *Migrating flocks stop in the Flathead & summer residents return.*

The Flathead Valley lies in a migration corridor. Large flocks of waterfowl pass through in March, April and May. The first songbirds arrive in late February and March – blackbirds, robins, varied thrushes, kestrels, and tree and violet-green swallows show up in middle to late March. Osprey arrive early April, and begin building nests in May. Most insect eaters arrive in May or early June – warblers, vireos, nighthawk, and flycatchers.

**Summer** *Newly hatched young appear.  
Southerly migration begins in late summer.*

Look for waterfowl broods along rivers and lakeshores. Flocks of swallows and blackbirds begin staging in late June for southern flight. Southbound shorebirds start showing up in July. Calliope and rufous hummingbirds begin to move south in late July and August.

**Fall** *Summer birds are leaving, winter birds are arriving.*

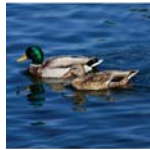
Most songbirds, kestrels, morning doves and osprey fly south by mid-September. Waterfowl return from the north and form flocks in pothole lakes and rivers. Rough-legged hawks and northern shrikes return from their northern breeding areas in November and December.

**Winter** *Many bird species over-winter in the Flathead area*

Feeders attract a variety of birds, including chickadees, nuthatches, evening grosbeaks, woodpeckers and jays. Winter finches, waterfowl, bald eagles and rough-legged hawks are usually present in good numbers. Bohemian waxwings fly about in large flocks, looking for winter berries.

**Birds Identified in the Wetland**

These birds species have been identified by sight, song or sound in the Averill's Viking Creek Wetland Preserve:



Mallard



Vaux's Swift



Pileated Woodpecker



Black-billed Magpie



Red-breasted Nuthatch



Yellow-rumped Warbler



Red-tailed Hawk



Violet-green Swallow



Northern Flicker



Common Raven



Ruby-crowned Kinglet



Northern Waterthrush



Ruffed Grouse



Tree Swallow



Least Flycatcher



American Crow



Belted Kingfisher



Wilson's Warbler



Wild Turkey



Red-naped Sapsucker



Red-eyed Vireo



Black-capped Chickadee



Swainson's Thrush



Western Tanager



Killdeer



Downy Woodpecker



Warbling Vireo



Mountain Chickadee



Gray Catbird



Black-headed Grosbeak



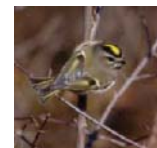
Great-horned Owl



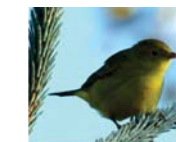
Hairy Woodpecker



Blue Jay



Golden-crowned Kinglet



Yellow Warbler



Song Sparrow

