

Utah County Birders Newsletter

August 2016



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AUGUST MEETING:

Thursday, August 11th, 2016

Potluck up South Fork - 7:00 pm.

Everyone is invited! Bring your friends and family! This year our potluck will be up Provo Canyon at South Fork Park. This is the park midway up the South Fork road in Provo Canyon. To get there, drive 5.4 miles from the mouth of the canyon to the South Fork turnoff at Vivian Park. Turn right up South Fork and follow the road 1.7 miles to South Fork Park. We will try and grab one of the pavilions. Bring a food item to share. Map: <https://goo.gl/maps/LTiVt8XYeFp>

FIELD TRIPS:

Saturday, August 6th, 2016: 8am - mid afternoon. Deloy Pack has offered to lead a trip to **Pat Jividen's place in Tabiona** on Saturday, August 6th. Meet at the North side of the Harmon's parking lot on 800 N. in Orem at 8am. First stop will be the Reid's place in Hannah where the group will spend half an hour or so, and then to the Jividen's place. Black-chinned, Broad-tailed, and Rufous Hummingbirds are a good bet, and Calliope Hummingbirds are possible (Pat and the Reid's have both seen them at their feeders). White-breasted nuthatches as well as other mountain birds are also possible. Plan to carpool and return via Hwy 35 around mid afternoon. Bring a camp stool or chair, and lunch/snacks.

Saturday, August 13th, 2016: 7am - late afternoon. **In search of migrating shorebirds.** Meet at the American Fork Park and Ride lot on Pioneer Crossing. We will follow shorebird reports north to **Antelope Is., Farmington Bay, or Bear River Refuge** depending on what's being seen and where. Bring a lunch. Led by Keeli Marvel

We are actively recruiting people to lead local half-day field trips, any time, any place. If you would like to lead a field trip or if you have any ideas for this year's field trips, please contact Keeli at - keeli.marvel@gmail.com

Utah County Birders Captain's Log: August 2016

by Keeli Marvel

I was doing a little thinking and a little research while preparing to write the article this month, and I discovered Wikipedia has a whole page devoted to "Twitcher's Vocabulary" (which you can find here: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Twitchers'_vocabulary)

While I don't generally hear it used a whole lot around here, in many birding circles a twitcher is what you call a person who chases birds - generally rare ones - which often require long distance travel to go see them. The worst thing that can happen when you've driven a long ways to see a bird is to not see it. This is what in the bird world is called dipping. I'm not sure why. I tried to look up the history of the term dipping, and still haven't found it (I'm dipping on the etymology of dipping). If anyone knows, please do share. (Side question- has anyone dipped on a Dipper lately?) The reason I mention this is I've been dipping on the majority of target birds I've gone after lately so I was thinking about how brutal it is to have a hobby where the target is so... well...flighty and predictably unpredictable.

I dipped on the Little Gull and the Common Tern and the Horned Grebes at Powell Lake. I've dipped twice now on Gray Jays and twice on Calliope Hummingbirds. I dipped on Black Swifts a couple of times (but to be fair, that is a hard species to get). I dipped on the Little Blue Heron. Am I a glutton for punishment? Maybe. More and more I find myself having to find other ways to justify my birding trips. At least I got a good hike in. At least we got to see xx species. It's never as satisfying as actually getting to see the target bird. But hey, I actually have gotten some good hikes in lately, and I can report that the wildflower bloom this year was phenomenal. I've fallen back on taking pictures of wildflowers and getting lifer mammals instead. This last weekend while hiking Bald Mtn. with Sam in the Uintas she pointed out a Cliff Chipmunk to me. Lifer Cliff Chipmunk! What else do you do when Ptarmigans and Gray Jays are nowhere to be found?

Anyone else been dipping a lot lately? I feel your pain. Hopefully with migration starting up here in the next few weeks the tide will turn and my luck will change. Guess we'll see. In the meantime, I'll be out there not finding the next rare bird.

Happy birding! (or hiking or mammal lifering or whatever gets you back out there after a dip).
Keeli Marvel

Bird of the Month

Rufous Hummingbird

(*Selasphorus rufus*)

by Eric Huish

[Rerun article from August 2013]

There are a few bird arrivals we all look forward to each year. In late summer when birding reaches a lull we all wait for the first Rufous Hummingbirds to show up at our feeders, usually mid to late July. I have always found Rufous Hummingbird Migration interesting. Every year I get several Rufous Hummingbirds visiting my feeders every day on their fall migration from late July to mid September. But I have only once seen a Rufous here in the Spring - on April 25, 1998. Rufous Hummingbirds migrate in a big circle following the flowers. They winter in Mexico. In spring they follow the blooming flowers up the coast of California when our mountains are still covered in snow. They summer in the Pacific Northwest. Then when the



photo by Jeff Cooper

mountain meadows are in full bloom they migrate South through the interior West and we get to see them at our feeders.

Rufous Hummingbirds are one of the easier hummingbirds to identify here in Utah. We don't get Allen's here (probably). Most male Rufous Hummingbirds are bright orange all over and adult female Rufous also have a lot of rusty orange color, even a few shiny feathers on the throat unlike our other female hummingbirds we see in Utah. Immature birds can be tricky and some can be very difficult to tell apart from immature Broad-tailed or Calliope.

Rufous Hummingbirds are energetic and fun to watch so put out a hummingbird feeder and enjoy.

If you would like to write an article for the Bird of the Month, please contact Machele - machele13johnson@yahoo.com

Field Trip Report

Mirror Lake Highway - July 9th, 2016

by Keeli Marvel

We had a large group – over 20 people – show up for the field trip up to Mirror Lake Parkway. It was good to see some new faces, too! We stopped at the fee booth a few miles outside of Kamas to regroup and birded for a few minutes picking up highlights such as FOY Gray Catbirds and a few other species. From there, we went on to the Lower Soapstone Basin road and parked by the bathrooms. Highlights there included a nesting Red-naped Sapsucker that we were able to get really good looks at and a Golden-crowned Kinglet showing off his golden crown. There were also probable sightings of a Nashville Warbler. From there we traveled up to the Bald Mountain Trailhead where we parked and walked up the hill to the northeast. A pair of Mountain Goats made an appearance up on the cliffs for us with their hair blowing majestically in the wind. We also had great looks at Cassin's Finches, Chipping



photo by Keeli Marvel

Sparrows, Mountain Bluebirds, and had a probable Rosy Finch sighting by a couple of birders in our group. We finished up the trip with a walk around Mirror Lake between the picnic area and the lower parking lot. Part of the group got great looks at a nesting American-three Toed Woodpecker and other members of the group got to see Pine Grosbeaks. Other highlights included Rufous Hummingbirds and one Clark's Nutcracker. Thanks to all who attended! Complete checklists at each stop can be found through the links below.

Mirror Lake Hwy Fee Booth: <http://ebird.org/ebird/view/checklist/S30629852>

Lower Soapstone Basin Road: <http://ebird.org/ebird/view/checklist/S30630439>

Bald Mountain Pass: <http://ebird.org/ebird/view/checklist/S30630513>

Mirror Lake: <http://ebird.org/ebird/view/checklist/S30630563>

Happy Birding!

Field Trip Report

Liedy Peak - July 30th, 2016

by Bryan Shirley

6 birders spent half a day hiking around Liedy Peak in Uintah County searching for Ptarmigan, but it was not meant to be. Most of us did add a few points to our Utah County Birders challenge score with good birds like Gray Jay, Clark's Nutcracker, American Pipit, etc. It was a disappointment to not find the Ptarmigan, but we had a good time and enjoyed the scenery. Now we are just going to have to find some other good bird to make up for missing the 3 point ptarmigan!

Backyard Bird of the Month

July 2016

Jack Binch - Sandy

Nothing really unusual, but I sure enjoyed the adult male **Rufous Hummingbirds** that arrived on the 14th and a couple are still here.

Jeff Cooper - Pleasant Grove

It was nice to see **Rufus Hummingbird** again.

Suzi Holt - Payson

Mine is definitely the **Rufous Hummingbirds** those little stinks have come in with a vengeance this year and rule the feeders. The Broad-tailed and Black-chinned barely have a chance. The wasps have also been really bad. You have to be careful when you are outside so as to not get stabbed in the war zone :) Love these little guys they bring sunshine to my life everyday!!!

Eric Huish - Pleasant Grove

Rufous Hummingbirds!

Keeli Marvel - Saratoga Springs

My Backyard bird was again a family of **Western Kingbirds** who fledged on my front gutter. Glad the babies finally flew the coop because the parents got really nervous every time we wandered out the front door.

Milt Moody - Provo

A nice male **Rufous Hummingbird** showed up as well as another batch of fledgling Black-headed Grosbeaks.

Leena Rogers - Provo

It's that glorious time of year! Have enjoyed watching brilliant male **Rufous Hummingbirds** dive bombing each other around our yard and feeders.

Report your favorite backyard bird each month to Eric Huish at 801-360-8777 or erichuish@gmail.com