

Utah County Birders Newsletter

June 2016



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JUNE MEETING:

Thursday, June 9th, 2016 - 7pm at the Bean Museum.

Neil Paprocki from **Hawkwatch** will give a presentation titled "**Short-eared Owl Conservation and Citizen Science**" on a Citizen Science project currently under way to understand more about Short-eared Owl populations in Utah.

Meet at 7:00 pm at the Monte L. Bean Museum. 645 East 1430 North, Provo, UT <http://mlbean.byu.edu/>

FIELD TRIPS:

Friday, June 10, 2016: Genola and Chimney Rock Pass. 5 pm til dark. We will meet at the Payson Walmart by the big blue sign. From there we will head West to Genola check for the Bobolink, then Elberta looking for burrowing owl, long-billed curlew. Then head out through Chimney Rock Pass. Ending close to Eureka.

Saturday, June 18th, 2016: 7am-12pm - **Soldier's Pass on the west side of Utah Lake**, led by Keeli Marvel. We will drive over the pass, stopping in various places to listen for birds and see what is around. We may also bird along the west end of Utah Lake on our way back. Higher clearance vehicles recommended for the Soldier's Pass Road. Meet in the southwest corner of the Saratoga Springs Walmart parking lot near the Chase Bank.

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: June 2016

by Keeli Marvel

I had a 21 warbler day and my mind was blown after five minutes on the boardwalk at Magee Marsh. But I'm getting ahead of myself.

I was fortunate enough to get work to approve my attendance to a bird banding training at the Powdermill Nature Reserve/Research Center conducted by the Carnegie Museum of Natural History in Pennsylvania. I spent five days expanding my understanding of bird ageing and molt patterns and banding birds that I hadn't even seen in the field before. During our off time I did a little birding and picked up a few lifers: Black-throated Green Warbler, Blue-winged Warbler, Bay-breasted Warbler, Cape May Warbler, Black-throated Blue Warbler, American Woodcock and Cerulean Warbler, Least Flycatcher, Veery, Louisiana Waterthrush, Canada Warbler, and Rose-breasted Grosbeak. Most of these birds were seen right around the banding center, however, one evening I drove up to Linn Run State Park and picked up the Veery, Canada Warbler, and the Louisiana Waterthrush. Another evening we drove a few miles away from the research center to a park called Laurel Highlands State Park, where I picked up the Black-throated Blue Warblers and walked out to a bog with an impressive display of carnivorous Pitcher Plants. On our last day at the Research Center, one of the guys doing his PhD research at Powdermill took us out a few miles away from the center to find the Cerulean Warblers. Lifer! I saw way more warblers than I'd been expecting to see at the training. So much so, that I was even considering skipping the trip up to Magee Marsh in favor of spending a few days relaxing and exploring Pittsburgh. (Crazy, right?) I'm glad I decided to head up to Magee anyways.

After my training ended, I took a couple of leave days and headed up to northern Ohio, on the coast of Lake Erie, and about a 3 hour drive from where I was training. I'd booked a cheap motel in Port Clinton, and on the morning of May 16 I headed out to Magee Marsh. The Biggest Week in Birding Festival at the Marsh had ended the day before, but there were still a ton of birders out on the boardwalk. As my luck would have it, a cold front had gone through the day before I got there, blowing in the best birds of the season to that point, and I saw birds they had not seen during the festival. If you've never been there, the only way I can describe it is to tell you to watch *The Big Year*. It's just like in the movie – hordes of birders packing the boardwalk and brightly colored warblers literally dripping off the trees everywhere you looked. The only difference was no one was yelling out rare species and most people were taking their time quietly moving along the boardwalk.

There were people there with ginormous lenses and the birds were literally too close for them to focus on. Within the first five minutes I had seen Cape May, Tennessee, and Chestnut-sided Warblers within arm's reach and at eye level. Mind blowing! It was like that for the entire day. I picked up lifer Philadelphia Vireo, Gray-cheeked Thrush, and Blackpoll Warblers (500th life species!) at the marsh. I spent the entire day birding up and down the boardwalk and got amazingly close-



Cape May Warbler



Chestnut-sided Warbler



The boardwalk at Magee when I first got there. It was a beautiful day!

up looks at 21 different warbler species. It was so impressive I ran out of superlatives to describe it. I would highly recommend it to anyone who has the opportunity to get up there. I'm not sure what the crowds were like during the festival, but I would also recommend doing what I did, and showing up the day after the festival. Here's my list of warblers I saw at Magee marsh in one morning of birding along the mile-long boardwalk:

1. Cape May Warbler
2. Magnolia Warbler
3. Tennessee Warbler
4. Nashville Warbler
5. Yellow Warbler
6. Bay-breasted Warbler
7. Ovenbird Warbler
8. Black-throated Green Warbler
9. Black-throated Blue Warbler
10. Blackpoll Warbler
11. Northern Waterthrush
12. Wilson's Warbler
13. Canada Warbler
14. Northern Parula
15. Yellow-rumped Warbler
16. Palm Warbler
17. Blackburnian Warbler
18. Common Yellowthroat
19. American Redstart
20. Prothonotary Warbler
21. Black-and-white Warbler

I ended the trip with 15 lifers and hit 500 species on my life list with Blackpoll Warbler as my 500th species, which I was particularly pleased about. Blackpoll Warblers are a striking black and white warbler with a black cap and bright orange legs that don't seem to match the rest of what the bird has going on. I couldn't ask for a better milestone species.

It seems like it's been a particularly good year for migrants here in Utah. I hope you've been out to see a few and maybe hit a few milestones yourself.

Happy Birding!

Keeli Marvel



Magnolia Warbler photo bomb



Black-throated Green Warbler

Bird of the Month

Golden-crowned Kinglet

Regulus satrapa

by Mabelle Johnson

3.1-4.3 inches, 5.5-7.1 inch wingspan

I've only seen a Golden-crowned Kinglet twice. The first time was in Glacier National Park, we were hiking to Avalanche Falls. If you haven't been to Glacier I suggest you drop everything and go now! It is a spectacular, beautiful place. I saw some activity just off the trail, on the outer tips of a conifer and stopped to look. The kinglets were hovering at the tips of the branches. According to Sibley they "glean tiny insects from branches, often hangs upside-down while foraging or hovers at tips of branches". The other time I saw them was at Aspen Grove. A few of us went up there hoping to find them and were lucky enough to see the same activity.



Golden-crowned Kinglet

photo by Paul Higgins

I love to read Pete Dunne's descriptions of birds, he's got a funny sense of humor. He calls it the 'Conifer Kinglet'. Of the Golden-crowned he says "A tiny, effervescent, and crisply patterned pixie of a bird. Despite the diminutive size, (smaller than any warbler), Golden-crowned is overall neckless and plump- a dumpling with a petite pointy bill, beady black eyes, and a short, narrow, deeply notched tail. In all plumages, a greenish gray bird with an eye-catching heavy-mascara face pattern, a racy white-and-yellowish wing pattern, and, in adults, a golden crown (orange-tinged in males). Sibley says "tiny, even smaller than Ruby-crowned, with boldly striped face, more gray-green (less buff) overall color, grayish flanks, bolder wing pattern, and slightly shorter tail". Dunne: "Hyperactive feeder, hopping quickly between branches and wing-flicking often (although less than Ruby-crowned). Forages by picking or hovering; is particularly adept at dangling chickadee-style from the tips of branches."

Dunne says "the song sounds like the laughter of pixies. Begins with several exceedingly high thin notes that accelerate and degenerate into high squeaky laughter, just brushing the tympanic membrane." You can listen to it at allaboutbirds.org.

Golden-crowned kinglets are common and widespread northern and montane breeders and widespread winter residents. In Utah they occur in the Northern and Eastern part of the state year round, wintering all over the state. The information I read didn't specify a typical elevation, but I've only seen them higher up in the mountains. In winter they can often be found in mixed flocks with chickadees, creepers, nuthatches and others.

If you would like to write an article for the Bird of the Month, please contact Mabelle - mabelle13johnson@yahoo.com

Field Trip Report

Hollow Park, Payson - May 21st, 2016

by Keeli Marvel

Thirteen people met in the cool drizzle this morning to bird Hollow Park in Payson. We were pleasantly surprised by the diversity of species and quality of the bird habitat in this park. For those unfamiliar with the area, the address of the north end of the park is 400 E 800 S Payson, and the trails run quite a ways through unimproved brushy areas toward the south. The highlight was a couple of Yellow-breasted Chats calling for most of our time at the park. Thanks to those who shared local knowledge of the birds in the area!

Following our walk through the park, most of the group also walked Skipper Bay where highlights included an overabundance of Bullock's Orioles, Yellow-rumped Warblers and Western Tanagers, one Eastern Kingbird towards the end of the trail, and a family of Sandhill Cranes (including a colt!). We looked for the American Redstart reported earlier, but were not able to relocate it.

Thanks to all who joined us for the field trip!

Hollow Park, Utah - 25 species

Ring-necked Pheasant 1
Double-crested Cormorant 1
Cooper's Hawk 1
Eurasian Collared-Dove 2
Mourning Dove 1
Black-chinned Hummingbird 1
Broad-tailed Hummingbird 1
Northern Flicker 1
Olive-sided Flycatcher 1
Warbling Vireo 2
Western Scrub-Jay 1
Common Raven 1
American Robin 1
European Starling 4
Yellow Warbler 6
Wilson's Warbler 1
Yellow-breasted Chat 2
Western Tanager 4
Black-headed Grosbeak 1
Lazuli Bunting 5
Bullock's Oriole 1
House Finch 1
Pine Siskin 15
Lesser Goldfinch 4
House Sparrow 1

View this checklist online at

<http://ebird.org/ebird/view/checklist?subID=S29814121>

This report was generated automatically by eBird v3
(<http://ebird.org>)

Skipper Bay Trail, Utah - 37 species (+1 other taxa)

Mallard 5
Cinnamon Teal 1
California Quail 1
Ring-necked Pheasant 2
Snowy Egret 1
Turkey Vulture 3
Osprey 1
Swainson's Hawk 1
Red-tailed Hawk 1
Sandhill Crane 3 Parents with juvenile crane
Killdeer 2
Spotted Sandpiper 1
Mourning Dove 2
Black-chinned Hummingbird 1
Western Kingbird 11
Eastern Kingbird 1
Black-billed Magpie 3
Purple Martin 3
Tree Swallow 3
Violet-green Swallow 20
swallow sp. 100
Black-capped Chickadee 1
Blue-gray Gnatcatcher 1
American Robin 3
MacGillivray's Warbler 1
Yellow Warbler 1
Yellow-rumped Warbler 12
Wilson's Warbler 2
Chipping Sparrow 25
White-crowned Sparrow 2
Lincoln's Sparrow 1 Heard only
Green-tailed Towhee 1
Western Tanager 12 Lots of tanagers migrating through
Red-winged Blackbird 15
Western Meadowlark 2 Heard only
Yellow-headed Blackbird 7
Brown-headed Cowbird 8
Bullock's Oriole 14

Field Trip Report

Utah County Hotspots - May 23rd, 2016

by Suzi Holt

Here is the checklist from the Ut Co Hotspots Fieldtrip. There were 15 UCB and Salt Lake birders that went on this trip.

Utah County, Utah County - 74 species (+1 other taxa) total

1 Canada Goose, 2 Gadwall, 3 American Wigeon, 2 Mallard, 4 Cinnamon Teal, 2 Northern Pintail, 2 California Quail, 2 Ring-necked Pheasant, 1 Double-crested Cormorant, 4 American White Pelican, 5 Great Blue Heron, 1 Snowy Egret, 12 White-faced Ibis, 2 Golden Eagle, 2 Northern Harrier, 3 Swainson's Hawk, 1 Red-tailed Hawk, 4 Sandhill Crane, 5 Black-necked Stilt, 9 American Avocet, 9 Killdeer, 6 Willet, 5 Long-billed Curlew, 2 Ring-billed Gull, 11 California Gull, 3 Eurasian Collared-Dove, 11 Mourning Dove, 2 Barn Owl, 1 Great Horned Owl, 2 Black-chinned Hummingbird, 2 Broad-tailed Hummingbird, 2 American Kestrel, 1 Western Wood-Pewee, 1 Say's Phoebe, 13 Western Kingbird, 1 Eastern Kingbird, 1 Western Scrub-Jay, 3 Black-billed Magpie, 1 American Crow, 9 Common Raven, 3 Horned Lark, 1 Northern Rough-winged Swallow, 1 Violet-green Swallow, 13 Barn Swallow, 5 Cliff Swallow, 4 Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, 5 American Robin, 1 Northern Mockingbird, 8 European Starling, 3 Common Yellowthroat, 7 Yellow Warbler, 4 Yellow-rumped Warbler, 2 Wilson's Warbler, 3 Yellow-breasted Chat, 1 Brewer's Sparrow, 6 Lark Sparrow, 1 White-crowned Sparrow, 1 Song Sparrow, 2 Green-tailed Towhee, 1 Spotted Towhee, 1 sparrow sp., 4 Western Tanager, 3 Blue Grosbeak, 2 Lazuli Bunting, 9 Red-winged Blackbird, 6 Western Meadowlark, 8 Yellow-headed Blackbird, 1 Brewer's Blackbird, 3 Great-tailed Grackle, 8 Brown-headed Cowbird, 7 Bullock's Oriole, 4 House Finch, 4 Pine Siskin, 1 American Goldfinch, 3 House Sparrow.

Some of us headed over to River Lane to find the Parula, no Parula but we did get a pretty good list and added 7 to our previous list for a total of 82 species for the day!

River Lane -- Sandy Beach, Utah County - 24 species (+1 other taxa) total

1 Red-breasted Merganser, 3 California Quail, 1 Eared Grebe, 3 American White Pelican, 2 Osprey, 1 Swainson's Hawk, 7 Killdeer, 1 Western Sandpiper, 8 California Gull, 3 Caspian Tern, 4 Mourning Dove, 4 Western Kingbird, 6 Purple Martin, 17 Tree Swallow, 25 Barn Swallow, 15 Cliff Swallow, 100 swallow sp., 2 American Robin, 8 European Starling, 3 Yellow Warbler, 1 Song Sparrow, 2 Western Tanager, 1 Red-winged Blackbird, 11 Yellow-headed Blackbird, 4 Bullock's Oriole.

Backyard Bird of the Month

May 2016

Jack Binch - Sandy

I had a female **Calliope Hummingbird** on 21 May 2016.

Yvonne Carter - Highland

A male and female **Black-headed Grosbeaks** have been singing away in the yard and a first-timer in my yard, a **Western Tanager**.

Eric Huish - Pleasant Grove

Western Wood-Pewee - calling outside my bedroom window at dawn.

Keeli Marvel - Saratoga Springs

My backyard bird(S) of the month were two birds I saw last week while window bird watching from inside my house. I had a **Western Tanager** and a **Wilson's Warbler** show up in the same tree in my backyard right after a storm.

Milt Moody - Provo

A male **Lazuli Bunting** showed up a couple of times, but not for very long - at least one of those beautiful birds finally showed.

Dennis Shirley - Elk Ridge

Pinyon Jays - May 10, 2016 - Had a small noisy flock fly across Loafer Canyon below house. Only second time ever at yard.

Alton Thygerson - Provo

Band-tailed Pigeons - Two made irregular feeding stops. Probably from the flock found near Milt's home.