

Utah County Birders Newsletter

January 2017



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JANUARY MEETING:

Thursday, January 12th, 2017

Annual dinner at Golden Corral - 7:00 pm

This month we will have our annual dinner at Golden Corral in Orem (225 W University Pkwy). Dinner is pay on your own, but we will have a room reserved for the club, and will hand out awards for the 2016 challenge. Even if you didn't participate in the challenge, we welcome you out for an evening of dinner and socializing.

FIELD TRIPS:

Saturday, Jan 14, 2017: 8am- early afternoon. Meet at the Provo East Bay Sam's Club Parking lot. We will check out various hot spots around the **East Bay Golf Course, Flow Serve, and Salem Pond**. Dress warm and bring a lunch or snacks.

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: January 2017

by Keeli Marvel

Another challenge year has come and gone and I hope everyone who participated had as much fun as I did! Here are a few highlights from 2016: I got to visit and bird one of my bucket list places – Magee Marsh in Ohio- where I absolutely had my mind blown by seeing 21 different warbler species in one day, several of which were lifers. I broke the 500 species mark on my life list, picking up 15 lifers this year including the Common Black Hawk in Utah. I picked up 7 Utah Lifers (first time seeing in Utah) including the Canada

Warbler and the Red-shouldered Hawk, both of which stuck around long enough for me to finally get around to seeing them.

I saw 233 species in Utah in 2016, recording them in 91 eBird checklists (which is pretty measly and something I'm resolving to improve in 2017). I led many field trips, met some of you for the first time, got to know a bunch of you better, and had a really great birding year. Recently, the Utah County Birders board met and decided I will continue as your president for another year. If you have any requests for meeting presentations, field trip suggestions, or you'd like to help lead a field trip, give us a yell (or a tweet I guess, since we're birders). I've got some good ideas for 2017, but I welcome all the help I can get because this is definitely more fun with all of you involved! Adios to a good year, and cheers to 2017 being even better!



Happy Birding!
Keeli Marvel

P.S. I get emails from the Black Swamp Observatory who manage Magee Marsh and the biggest week in birding festival in Ohio, and they sent out the following graphic I wanted to pass along for those wondering like I do what we can continue to do to help the birds: (and since I know a lot of you don't drink coffee-substitute "Purchase bird friendly products" for "Drink Bird-Friendly Coffee".)

Bird of the Month **Greater White-fronted Goose**

(Anser albifrons)

by Mabelle Johnson

Nothing really special about this plain, dark grayish-brown, short-necked goose. It is the same size as a Snow Goose with a short neck, compact body, and sturdy orange legs and feet. It has a pink or orange-pink bill and a white-rimmed face. Pete Dunne says "For identification, rely on the overall brown blandness." I should have read up on Pete Dunne's description before I went out looking for it the other day!

Amanda and I went to the Flow-Serve Ponds hoping to find this goose that EVERYONE else has seen for the past month or more. I personally had been 4 previous times with



photo by Paul Higgins

no luck! There are a lot of ponds and creeks there at Flow Serve, I had only been to the main pond until a few weeks ago. We saw a pair of Hooded Mergansers, the Great Egret, Canada Geese, Ring-billed Gulls, Pied-billed Grebes, Gadwalls, lots of Domestic ducks, but not GWF goose.

We went on down to Salem Pond and saw lots of good ducks on the pond, then stopped at Flow Serve again on our way back North. We drove right back to the 'Pink Flamingo Pond', as we had been told that is where it likes to hang out, but it was not in the pond with the Canada Geese. I was ready to leave but Amanda said, "Wait, what is that across the road on the shore?" It was snowing pretty hard by then, I glanced at the 'duck' and said "Domestic". I was leaving – done – figured we were skunked again. Amanda said, "Wait, I want to take a look." Guess what, it was a plain, dark grayish-brown, short-necked goose with an orange-pink bill and orange legs and feet. What??? I totally blew this off as nothing!

Thanks Amanda for your patience and persistence! We got us a lifer! (Two days too late for the 2016 Challenge, but still, a good bird for our first day out in the new year. Things are looking good for 2017! I realize that some really great birds were seen during the Payson CBC, but for us working moms that get out when we can, a GWF Goose is awesome!

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

Provo CBC Report

by Bryan Shirley

The Provo CBC was pretty brutal at times today with the cold temps and winds, but we ended up with one of our better counts in recent years. Here are a few highlights:

5 goose species: East Bay Golf Course and Flow Serve Ponds

Eurasian Wigeon: East Bay

Pelican: South of East Bay Golf Course

DC Cormorant: South of East Bay Golf Course

Dunlin: End of river lane at the mouth of the Spanish Fork River

Common Yellowthroat: East Bay Golf Course - I think it was near hole 16?

White-throated Sparrow - Kuhni Wetlands

Thanks everybody who participated & Good Birding,

Backyard Bird of the Month

December 2016

Jack Binch - Sandy

Tough call last month. I had a Merlin, a Sharp-shinned Hawk, a Cooper's Hawk, a Myrtle Yellow-rump and I guess my favorite a **Spotted Towhee**. Have not had one of those in the yard for a couple of years.

Lyle Bingham - Payson

My favorite birds this month are the **Ring-necked Pheasants** cleaning up under my feeder. I have two competing roosters and five hens. However, they rarely show up together. The roosters make sure of that.

Yesterday, the roosters flew past the window while the hens had the sense to forage. The pheasants clean up below, making the juncos, white-crowned sparrows, house finches, Eurasian collared doves, western scrub jays and spotted towhees visit the feeder. Of course they sort and spill. The only two not feeding the pheasants with fallout are the bc chickadees and the Downey woodpecker.

Yvonne Carter - Highland

My bird feeders were crazy after the Christmas storm: Spotted Towhee, Western Scrub Jays, Lesser Goldfinch, tons of Juncos and House Finches, Doves, Black-capped Chickadees and a California Quail even!

Eric Huish - Pleasant Grove

Cooper's and **Sharp-shinned Hawks** - always exciting winter visitors.

Milt Moody - Provo

I had a **Yellow-rumped Warbler** show up in my apple tree.

Carol Nelson - Provo

December has been a good month for birds of prey in our back yard. Today, two Bald eagles, earlier Red-tailed hawks, a couple of Merlins, Sharp-shinned Hawks and Kestrels used the same tree. Right now a flock of 20-30 American Goldfinch, unusual for my feeders, Lesser goldfinch, Red-breasted nuthatches, Black-capped chickadees and the usual neighborhood varieties.

Dennis Shirley - Elk Ridge

Pretty slow in yard this month - just more or less the usual. Flock of **13 Lesser Goldfinch** regular thru month. Backyard Bird Misses of the Month- Pine Siskin, Steller's Jay, Cassin's Finch. Where are they this year!!!

Alton Thygerson - Provo

Cassin's Finch - Surprised to see, but the sharply defined crimson red cap stood out. House finches were also present.

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

The Utah County Birders Newsletter is now online only/mostly.

If you would like an email notice each month when the Newsletter is posted online please send an email to Eric Huish at erichuish@gmail.com.

We are willing to print the online version of the newsletter and mail it out to anyone who still wants a paper copy or who doesn't have internet access. If you know of anyone who enjoys the UCB Newsletter but doesn't have internet access please let Eric Huish or Keeli Marvel know and we will make sure they get a copy.