



Utah County Birders: May 2019 Newsletter

UCB Captain's Log, May 2019

by Keeli Marvel

Hello my faithful and courageous Birders! Spring has sprung and migration is in full swing! The past couple of weeks have brought an influx of spring migrants in my neighborhood and I've been celebrating each new arrival. I'm still participating in the 5MR challenge and this month the special challenge (in addition to adding birds to my 5MR list is to keep a yard list of species I see/hear in or from my yard. While I feel like I don't have the birdiest of yards compared to some, it definitely hasn't been too shabby and it's certainly made spring migration that much more fun as I try and spend more time outside in my yard spotting migrants. I've racked up 83 species in my 5MR and 22 species in my yard. So far my yard list includes the following:

House finch	House sparrow	Lesser goldfinch
Great horned owl	Eurasian collared dove	Black capped chickadee
American robin	Killdeer	White crowned sparrow
Sandhill crane	American Kestrel	Western kingbird
Raven	Red-winged blackbird	Swallow sp
California gull	Yellow-rumped warbler (Myrtle)	Turkey Vulture
Canada goose	Yellow-rumped warbler (Audubon)	Yellow Warbler
American goldfinch	Northern flicker	

I head to TX on Monday for a work training and I'm hoping to pick up a few more lifers while I'm down there. Stay tuned for next month's article to find out if I'm successful!

Happy Birding!

Keeli Marvel

MAY MEETING:

Thursday, May 9th at 7:00 pm at the Monte L. Bean Museum, BYU Campus

Jesse Lee will be our guest speaker with a presentation titled "Costa Rica - A World of Wings"

FIELD TRIPS:

May 13th - Utah County Hot Spots trip for the club to prepare for the festival trip if anyone wants to go. It will be on May 13th 7-3. meet at Walmart parking lot NE Corner.

Friday, May 31st and Saturday, June 1st - WASHINGTON COUNTY

Lead by Suzi Holt. You will need your own accommodations.

We will meet at the McDonald's on Bluff Street Friday morning at 6 am to head out to Lytle Ranch. Bring a lunch. On the way back we will stop by Utah Hill to look for the Black-chinned Sparrow, then look for a Bell's Vireo and Common Blackhawk along the Sanra Clara River. We may go to Snow Canyon, Tonaquint Nature Park, Brooks Narure Park and Boits/Cox Park if time permits.

Saturday we will start out looking for Inca Doves in Hurricane, then head to Kolob Terrace. Meet at 7 am at the Wal-Mart in Hurricane in the SW corner of the parking lot. It is located east of the Sand Hollow turn off, along Hwy 9, 180 N 3400 W Hurricane

Bird of the Month:

Western Scrub-Jay aka Woodhouse's Scrub Jay (*Aphelocoma woodhouseii*)
by Jim Strong

This bird is very entertaining for me each morning as I fill my variety of feeders. A pair of Western Scrub-Jays are usually near by or in the trees waiting for a few welfare peanuts (in the shell). If I do not share the peanuts quickly they let me know in a hurry....such selfishness! They can really be noisy. We have not had them brave enough to take a peanut from our hand but that may change. I made a mistake one morning and left the peanut can near the feeders and it did not take the Jays long to empty the 100 or so peanuts. They bury them in my yard and the neighbors yard maintaining a long term food supply. Since they do store seeds and nuts its likely they serve as a major distributor of seeds of oaks and pines by not returning to eat them or possibly forgetting where all of the seeds were hidden. They do have remarkable memories for their food storage program. Recent research has suggested that Western Scrub Jays are among the most intelligent of animals. However they are not above stealing the nut caches of other jays and some woodpeckers.



Woodhouse's Scrub-Jay - new name after species split

Description: Blue head with a thin white eyebrow and no crest. The throat is white with a blue streaked necklace. The back is gray with a dark gray saddle, blue band on the chest with whitish and grayish under parts. The legs, feet and bill are black.

The Scrub Jay is a tame bird especially around picnic areas, parks and feeders and very approachable for the photographer. Pairs of jays form long term bonds and the young may stay with the parents for as long a two years and assist their parents with other nestlings the following year.

Male and female are colored alike and the juveniles are similar to the adults.

Nest: cup type built by both sexes and 1 brood per year.

Habitat: Variety of habitats, including brushy open country, desert scrub, orchards and canyons.

Eggs: 2 - 6 pale green or gray with reddish brown markings.

Incubation: 15 - 17 days by the female and fed by the male.

Fledging: Altricial young are naked, helpless with eyes closed and fledge within 19 days.

Life span in the wild: Approximately 9 years

Food: They are opportunistic feeders that have a varied diet of insects, seeds, mice, frogs, berries fruits, acorns, eggs and nestlings of other birds. They will visit areas around seed feeders.

Size: 11 inches, wingspan 16 inches, weight 2.8 ounces

Migration: Non migratory

Sources:

Smithsonian BIRDS OF NORTH AMERICA by Fred J. Alsop III

FIELD GUIDE TO BIRDS By Donald and Lillian Stokes (Western Region)

BACKYARD BIRDS OF UTAH by Bill Fenimore

BIRDS OF UTAH BY (field guide) by Stan Tekiela

WIKKIPEDIA (computer)

Field Trip 19th and 20th of April, 2019

Fish Springs National Wildlife Refuge

Report and Photos by Keeli Marvel

Seven Birders showed up on a snowy, rainy, sleety day for some good car birding. Ducks are going to stay put right? Well Spring Lake was a bust with only a **American Wigeon** and Pond ducks, a **DC cormorant**. But we did see a beautiful **Merlin**. Too bad it was so gloomy for photos. On the way to Salem Pond we saw 5 **American Kestrels**. Salem Pond was terrible too! There was one **Lesser**



Scaup, a few **Common Goldeneye**, the Pond Ducks and a couple **Canada Geese**. But the **Muskrat** was obliging. On to Salem Fields. We found a bunch of **Ring-necked ducks**, some more **Lesser Scaup** and a few **Gadwall**, but the bonus was 18 **Wilson's Snipes** flying around together in the field!! Also there were a few more **Canada Geese**, **Mallards**, a couple **Killdeer** and two **Bald Eagle**. At the North Salem Fields we saw **Red-tailed Hawk**, **Cinnamon Teal**, a lone **Northern Pintail**, a bunch more **Ring-necked Ducks** and 4 **Northern Shovelers** and a **Flicker**. On the way to Benjamin Slough we saw **Western Meadowlarks**, **Brewer's** and **Red-winged Blackbirds** and a few more **American Kestrels**.! ■

At the slough we found **Green-winged** and **Cinnamon Teal**, a huge group of **Redheads**, 3 **Buffleheads**, **Northern Shovelers** and lots more **Northern Pintails** and Geese. We decided to go around West Mountain to from Lincoln Beach to Lebarron Point. We found 3 more **Bald Eagles**, 9 **Great Blue Herons** and some more **Northern Pintails**, **American Coots** and **Gadwall**. In Genola/Goshen Fields we saw more **Red-tailed Hawks**, **Canada Geese**, **Northern Pintails**, **American Wigeons**, **Cinnamon Teal** and **Mallards**. Overall a great day for ducks and a few Raptors. Thanks to all who braved the storm!

