



December 2025

UTAH COUNTY BIRDERS NEWSLETTER

CONTENTS:

- [Monthly Meeting, Announcements](#)
- [President's Message](#)
- [Upcoming Field Trips](#)
- [Bird of the Month](#)
- [Field Trip Reports](#)
- [Art Gallery](#)
- [Backyard Birds](#)

MEETINGS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

Thursday December 11, 2025, 7pm

Thursday, December 11th, 2025, 7pm at the Bean Museum on online via Zoom. Come prep for the Christmas Bird Counts with us. Join us as we REVEAL our 2026 UCB birding challenge, hear about the Utah Birding Slam from a special guest from the DWR, and play a little game to prepare for our Christmas Bird Counts!

If you haven't heard, the Utah DWR is sponsoring a birding challenge called the Birding Slam! Funds raised will go directly to supporting bird and other wildlife conservation and habitat improvement projects. Each slam you sign up for costs \$20 and you get a slam prize for completion.

To kick things off they're hosting a few free birding events coming up in November, See the article below for details on those events. We will also have a presentation about the Birding Slam by the DWR at our November UCB meeting if you want to learn more! This is a really fun way to incentivize birding and support wildlife conservation and could be done concurrently with our UCB birding challenge in 2026.

<https://ksltv.com/environment/utah-birding-slam-for-fall-migration/837379/>

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

As we end 2025, I will be passing along the 'baton' as President of this great group at the beginning of 2026. I have enjoyed the journey as President. So let me share with you thoughts and hopes I have experienced during this tenure. When I joined the Utah County Birders almost 20 years ago--whoa, time goes by fast!--I was very, very inexperienced at birding. I have shared my story before about those who 'pulled' me into this marvelous activity--I had come to the first field trip with a cheap set of \$10 binoculars, not even knowing about a 'life list'.

I had a few unique experiences with birds which drove me with the desire to know more. I had walked amongst Trumpeter Swans sitting on their nests with little baby swans nestled under them in a nature preserve in Michigan, and later years in the same preserve walk on trails with Sandhill Cranes followed by their young. One Saturday morning, a Bald Eagle flew through our back yard on its way to Utah Lake on a winter day. I spent a lot of time in San Diego with our oldest daughter at La Jolla (which was a childhood 'haunt' for me) watching Pelicans and seals. I wanted to know more when I saw a billboard advertising the Great Salt Lake Bird Festival which started it all.

I was invited during that festival to the 'Utah County Big Day'. And it has been the Shirley family, Milt Moody, Merrill Webb, Carol Jean Nelson, Robin Tuck, Alton Thygerson, Esther and Flora Duncan, Eric Huish, Ned Hill and so many, many others that I can't name them all who shared their knowledge and experience to help me by way of the field trips, the monthly meetings, and yes, the challenges each even numbered year.

There are several things that must happen to keep it going. We need the long-time birders (you know who you are) to continue to be active and participate. Your experience and knowledge is needed to help those who have never birded before see the beauty of this earth. We need to pull into the group young people to participate in this wonderful activity. We have activities that have been traditional with the UCB and we need to keep it going. So, look for opportunities to invite people to join in the activities. I have noticed a decline in attendance, and I hope that will change.

So, 'hats off' to the new leadership!

Happy Birding! Yvonne Carter, President

UPCOMING FIELD TRIPS

AUDUBON CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNTS

The UCB is excited to sponsor both the Provo and Payson Christmas Bird Counts and WE NEED YOUR HELP! If you would like to help count birds, we'd love to have you join us!

The **Provo** CBC will be Saturday Dec 20th. We will have a tally potluck at the end of the day at 6pm at the Utah Lake State Park (park pass not required to attend). Bring a food item to share and join us as we celebrate the good birding. Sign up online here: https://www.mobilize.us/audubon-community-science/event/863544/?force_banner=true&share_context=event_details&share_medium=copy_link

We will assign areas as we get closer. Once you're signed up, stay tuned and keep an eye out for an email with your area assignments and further details.

The **Payson** Christmas Bird Count will be Saturday Jan 3rd. Sign up online here:
<https://www.mobilize.us/audubon-community-science/event/866012/>

We are meeting at the Payson McDonalds at 7:30am (note slightly earlier time). Participants will need to email/text their completed checklists at the end of the day by 9pm on the day of the count to Keeli.marvel@gmail.com or 801-602-9566.

We will assign areas as we get closer. Once you're signed up, stay tuned and keep an eye out for an email with your area assignments and further details.

BIRD OF THE MONTH

American Robin

Turdus migratorius

Article by Yvonne Carter



Photo by John Crawley

I was sitting on my deck last night at dusk (yes, the temperature was still mild), wondering what to write about and then I heard the 'horse whinny' of our common bird, the American Robin. So, I thought, "Why not!" The Robin is one of the first birds we hear in the morning and the last as the sun sets in the West. The Robin runs along our lawn pecking at the ground as it tries to find that delicious worm.

Its scientific name is *Turdus migratorius*. It's usual length averages at 10 inches. Its habitat seems to be everywhere from woodlands, swamps, urban parks and to your backyard and gardens. It is a large, sturdy songbird with long legs and tail. It is gray brown above, White throat, orange-red breast, black head and tail, and a yellow bill.

Being wide-spread and common, the ubiquitous and very abundant American Robin is one of the best-known American birds and is often seen in suburban gardens. In summer it can migrate into Canada and the far north, but it is found all year round across most of America. It nests in shrubs, trees, or even on buildings, and it builds a sturdy cup of roots, twigs and mud, lined with soft material. It holds 3-4 small blue eggs. These are incubated by the female bird, and they usually leave the nest about 3-4 weeks after hatching. The female is duller, and juveniles lack the red breast and are spotted beneath. The adult Robin forages on lawns with its head held cocked, looking for earthworms, and it also eats insects and berries. It perches with the bill slightly elevated giving it a demeanor of being haughty.

Its migration is interesting. Even though I have seen some Robins in my area in the winter, I have been on occasion in January usually in Florida and have seen huge flocks of them together, completely covering a tree. It is almost as if the tree is in motion. It is amazing to watch! Most of the migration south happens in late October and November and movement north can start in late February with them reaching Alaska in late April.

Its behavior is also interesting to watch. It forages in the open, on the ground. It runs and stops, runs and stops. It jabs forward and with the bill to extract its worm. Young birds will hop, as do adults at times, especially if there is a lot of leaves.

I recommend you read the entry for American Robins in Peter Dunne's book, "Essential Field Guide Companion" on page 503-4 which has a lot of interesting information that we don't have space here to include.

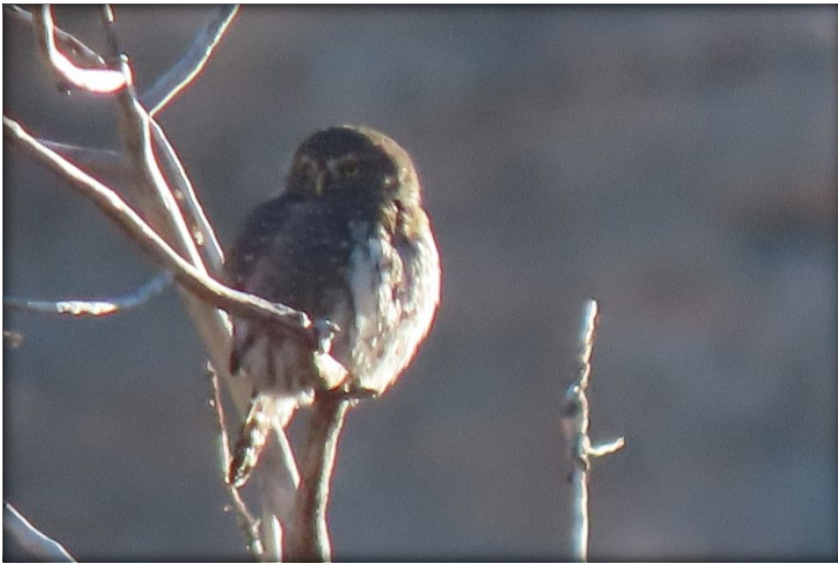
Turkey Trot

Article and photos by Suzi Holt & Amanda Tinoco



2025 Turkey Trot!! Our 7th annual! Our first bird up South Fork was a American Dipper, second was a Stellar's Jay, third was our favorite the "little pyg" Northern Pygmy Owl!! Just above South Fork park in the neighborhood was where we found the majority of our turkeys we tallied 156 total in South Fork and enjoyed Banana bread brownies. I ran out of time to make turkey cookies oops! From there Yvonne checked Sundance and added 6! We headed to Diamond Fork. Not a turkey to be found besides us! But Juan Rhoades had probably 13 Lewis's Woodpeckers!!! We also saw two Golden Eagles, Woodhouse's Scrub Jays, Black-billed Magpies, Dark-eyed Juncos, a ton of Ravens and a couple Spotted Towhees! Next stop Payson Canyon. On the way over my cousin Steve called from Provo and had 4 turkeys at his home! So that brought our total to 166! Up in the fields above Beer Can Flats we added 96 turkeys. There were probably more but they were playing hide and seek in the oak! Santaquin Canyon was beautiful but a bust :(

We decided to head out to Lincoln Beach to see how the Ancient Murrelet search was going and see the Northern Parula! The Parula was very obliging once again and a treat to see! A overall great day! Around 5 Dennis called in with his numbers from Elk,Ridge and Woodland Hills adding 107 more turkeys! For a grand total of 369!!!!



Northern Pygmy Owl



Lewis's Woodpecker



Newest UCB member



Northern Parula



ART GALLERY

No submissions

Backyard Birds

Tonya Selby – Book Cliffs: So, this is outside of Utah Co BUT, I did see Bush Tits and a Gray-crowned Rosy Finch in the bottom of the Book Cliffs last week! So cool!



Jim Strong – Lehi: Dark-eyed Junco.

