



Utah County Birders Newsletter

June 2026

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JUNE MEETING

June 11, 2026

Our UCB Meeting for June will be a bird walk in Provo Canyon.

June UCB Meeting: Thursday, June 11, 7pm. Provo Canyon Bird Walk. Meet at Vivian Park in Provo Canyon. (Google map location: https://maps.app.goo.gl/fA1h9oaNr8UPzrZs5?g_st=ic)

We will walk the Provo River Trail/Railroad Trail and look for American Dippers and other canyon birds. All birder experience levels welcome!

UPCOMING FIELD TRIPS

5 JUN 5
FRIDAY
6:00 AM

UTAH COUNTY

CARPPOOL: LOCATION TBA - CHECK FACEBOOK AND/OR INSTAGRAM FOR DETAILS

WE WILL BE COMPLETING A LOCAL "BIG DAY" FIELD TRIP **THROUGHOUT UTAH COUNTY.**

Field Trip on June 5th 2026

Utah County Big Day at 6 AM.

Meet at the Payson WalMart to the west of the Quick Quack car wash.

We will carpool from there and head to Warm Springs. We will then head over to East Goshen Ponds. We will drive out into the Goshen Fields from there, and possibly check Goshen Reservoir. We will head from there and go up into the Tintic Mountains along Dividend Road. At the top in Eureka, we will stop at a gas station to use the bathroom, grab snacks, and eat lunch. We will head down Elberta Slant Road and then work our way back to Santaquin. We will run up Santaquin for a few stops and finish at Tinney Flat Campground, where we will turn back and return to the Payson Walmart. You are welcome to join in for all or part of the day. I imagine we will be finished by no later than 5 PM, possibly earlier. If you want to text or call KC at (801) 369-5984 to meet up after 6 AM then please feel free to do so and he can let you know where they are on the route. The goal is to see at least 100 species on the day, and hopefully more.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

By KC Childs

I can't believe that it is already June and that means we are almost halfway through the year and the challenge. Suzi Holt and others have done an amazing job getting people out to see birds all over the state of Utah, and there are more great trips planned in the future. If you haven't started the challenge, or are falling behind, don't worry, we are at the time of the year where picking up 26 birds in a county is relatively easy with all the local breeding birds here for the summer. It's a great chance to get out and see parts of Utah that you have never seen before, join some of the amazing field trips, meet new people, and get a cool certificate and prize at the end of it all. Also, hopefully it will help you refine your skills as a birder, and get to add some valuable data to science if you log your birds on eBird. We have a handy online tracking tool that you can use which makes keeping track a breeze. To get a bronze you only need to do 5 of the letters of the challenge, so hopefully that is still attainable for most people. In fact, we already have some people who have completed the challenge and it's only May. All of the rules and an online tracking sheet, and a downloadable tracking sheet can be found here: <http://www.utahbirds.org/ucb/index.html> All you have to do is click on the challenge details tab. Birding is always more fun when you get to do it with others and I know I personally look forward to these challenges every two years! I can't wait to meet some more new faces on some of our upcoming field trips and see the old familiar ones as well! See you out on the birding trail!

BIRD OF THE MONTH

Black Phoebe

Sayornis nigricans

Text and photo by Kristin Telford

The first time we saw a Black Phoebe (that we realized) was when we first got into birding about a decade ago. We took a day trip to Zion National Park to see birds- California Condors, of course, but in one area along a stream, we saw this small black bird with a white belly.

We tried to get pictures. I don't know how successful we were. The bird would fly away then come back to the same spot- typical flycatcher behavior- so we were able to get a look at it.

That was Southern Utah. Black Phoebes aren't as common in our area, though I have seen them from time to time in the Rock Cliff Recreation Area of Jordanelle Reservoir and once out Spanish Fork Canyon.

The most recent Black Phoebes we saw were in May of this year in Southern Utah again, this time in St. George. We saw a couple hanging out at the turtle pond at Tonaquint Nature Center. This time we were able to get decent photos because they were closer and we knew they would keep coming back to perch on the branches near us.

Black Phoebes like to spend time near water, from ponds to rivers to reservoirs, even along the Pacific coastline. I can always guarantee when visiting my parents in Western Oregon in the summer that I will see a Black Phoebe at a nature park near their house. There are ponds and a nice river running through the area with plenty of insects for the phoebe to eat. It's a bit longer drive than to Southern Utah, but I can sneak in a few birds I don't see in Utah but do see there, one being a Green Heron (but I'll save that bird for a later Bird of the Month article).

Where some flycatchers are year-round in their area and won't see nests too close to rookery), and why you can see the same phoebes.

Black Phoebes are broods a year. Nests are sort plant fibers and will usually overhang whether that's a building.



migratory, Black Phoebes tend to stay can be territorial, which is why you each other (like you would with a heron keep coming back to the same places to

monogamous and will raise a couple of cup shaped made with mud and be built right under a protective branch, part of a cliff, or even eaves of a

In my opinion, Black Phoebes are pleasant birds to see, much easier for me to identify than the smaller empids, which mostly look the same. I love the contrast of mostly black with some white on the lower parts. They do have the typical flycatcher peak on the top of their heads, which I think is fun.

I hope if you haven't yet, you will get a chance to see a Black Phoebe and I hope you will enjoy watching it.

Sources:

allaboutbirds.org

birdsoftheworld.org

The Sibley Guide to Bird Life & Behavior

FIELD TRIP REPORTS

Wow what a day!! We did Box Elder, Cache and Rich counties today!!

35 birders showed up to the field trip. What a crew.

Our first stop was at Willard Bay SP; we began at the Willow Creek campground. Being spring time we knew we could catch our 26 species fairly quick which we did! We were greeted by Red-winged Blackbirds, European Starlings and Brown-headed Cowbirds. In the parking lot we had multiple Yellow Warblers, Western Wood Pewees, Black-headed Grosbeak and Bullock's Orioles. We walked the nature trail, adding American Robin, American Goldfinch, Song Sparrow, Mourning Dove, Western Tanager, Cedar Waxwing and Gray Catbird. There were reports of Least Flycatchers so KC set out to find them. We added Western Kingbird, Barn Swallow, Tree Swallow and lots more cowbirds. There were California Gulls, an American Kestrel and Great-tailed Grackles too. Lynn had picked up the Least Flycatcher on Merlin, so a few of us headed off to search. It took a little bit to track one down but KC soon picked up the che- BEK che-BEK call and located it over by the restrooms in a tree. Everyone was so excited and for some it was a lifer! By the shoreline we added Spotted Sandpiper, Yellow-headed Blackbird, Black-necked Stilt, Double-crested Cormorant, American White Pelican, Great Blue Heron, California Quail, Common Goldeneye, Red-breasted Merganser, Mallard and Gadwall. We also saw Western Grebe, Ring-billed Gull and a ton of Forster's Terns! A Downy Woodpecker was calling as well. We tallied 36 species here and everyone got their 26 species for the challenge.

Time to move on to Cache County. We met at the Logan fields to try for Bobolinks! A few of us heard one but they were not obliging so we didn't get to see one. But we did have a lot of White-faced Ibis, a Sandhill Crane, Common Raven, Belted Kingfisher, Red-tailed Hawk, Swainson's Hawk, Mourning Dove, Eurasian Collared-Dove, Franklin's Gull, Western Kingbird, Black-billed Magpie, Savannah Sparrow, House Sparrow and Western Meadowlark. We added Ring-necked Pheasant, California Gull, European Starling, and Eastern Kingbird along the way to Sue's Pond. There we added American White Pelican, Canada Goose, American Coot, Redhead, Ruddy Duck, Mallard, Pied-billed Grebe and a Canvasback. We also had baby Coots!! There were Great -tailed Grackles, a Yellow-rumped Warbler, Red-winged and Yellow-headed Blackbirds, Barn, Tree and Cliff Swallows too. We also got good looks at a Marsh Wren. A DC Cormorant flew over the pond as we were leaving. From there we headed up Logan Canyon. We added American Crow and Osprey on the drive. We finished Cache with 38 species! Everyone got their 26 species too!

At the Bear Lake lookout it was really windy; it was our first stop in Rich County. We added a Red-tailed was all. We headed down to the Bear Lake SP marina. We saw Red-winged Blackbird, American White Pelican, Mallard, Canada Goose, Ring-billed Gull, Barn Swallow, Tree Swallow, American Crow and Western Grebe. Some saw the DC Cormorant and Caspian Tern fly over too. We then headed south down to the south end ponds by Laketown. On the way there we added Brewer's Blackbird, Lesser Goldfinch, Eurasian Collared-Dove, Mourning Dove, European Starling and Sandhill Crane. We also saw a Swainson's Hawk flying over the south end of the lake. By the way, the lake looked so Caribbean blue!! At the pond we added Yellow-headed Blackbird, American Robin, Killdeer, Canada Goose, Northern Harrier and Rock Pigeon. We then drove around Round Valley. We saw Eurasian Collared-Dove, House Sparrows, and Osprey in Lake Town. Then added American Robin, American Coot, Yellow Warbler, Yellow-rumped Warbler, Bullock's Oriole, Black-chinned Hummingbird, Western Meadowlark, American Kestrel, Northern Rough-winged Swallow and more Barn Swallows at the wetlands. We also had Franklin's Gull, Turkey Vulture, Common Raven, Red-tailed Hawk, Savannah Sparrow, a Forster's Tern and 5 Bobolinks!! We finished Rich County with 42 species!



Birding field trip to Texas by Tatum, age 5 (Suzi Holt's grandson)

We went to Texas to bird and drove lots of time!! We found alligators the Elf owl, Great Kiskadee, White Winged Dove, Buff bellied Hummingbird, the Red-winged Blackbirds, and the Whistling Duck. We got to ride on a big Electric Wheelchair with great grandma! And we saw 2 hogs! We also saw the loud Chacalocas! We climbed up the Hawk tower to see all the Broad-winged Hawks, and the Swallowtailed Kite! We got to ride our bikes around there and get muddy! We went to the bakery and got donut holes and freshly squeezed orange juice just to look at the garbage can for hours that stunk to find the Cattle Tyrant!(photo by Jacob Astin) We got to cross a ferry in our car and we saw lots dolphins and Brown Pelicans!! We found lots of sea shells and I caught lots of butterflies! I caught a black Swallowtail! I also got to hold a turtle! (That my mom didn't know about until I brought him up from the water! So i put him back!) We saw a huge 6ft Alligator while trying to find the Common Parques didn't see them but found some eggs! On our way back from see the Whopping Crane we found a Tarantula! And one of the ladies put it in a container for us to hold! We had a pool in our backyard and caught frogs out of the back of it! That was our break after birding! We got



Hooded Warblers, Tennessee Warblers, and Kentucky Warblers! I also found a lifer for everyone that my grandma Suzi has been wanting to see forever!!! I said grandma theres a red bird over here and it was a Scarlet Tanager!!!! And my grandma was dancing!! There was also a Summer Tanager by it! Photo taken by Rich mine was blurry! I also followed this Turnstone trying to get a good shot! While we saw the Brown Booby in the scope! We saw the Green Parrakeets, and the Red Crowned Amazon Parrots!!! They were so loud!!! We've had lots of fun and saw so many birds!!! And made so many memories!

-Tatum



Red-crowned Parrot



ScarletTanager, by Rich Glassford

BACKYARD BIRDS

Yvonne Carter, Highland: The Black-headed Grosbeaks have been singing like crazy in my backyard.

Suzi Holt, Payson: I had California Quail this last month, the first time I have had them in my yard in Payson.

Cindy Crookston, Bear River Bird Refuge: These photos were taken on the detour loop because of construction on the main loop.

