

INDIAN PEAKS FOUR SEASON BIRD COUNTS

Spring, Summer 2001

Newsletter

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Spring Count Summary

The Spring Count produced slightly higher than average numbers. This is in spite of the first week of the count period having snow and cold temperatures. The second week was generally mild and provided some good birding, as many long distance migrants arrived early.

Spring Count Summary

Number of Species – 88 (Average – 83)
Individuals – 39 Per Hour (Average – 36)

The higher than average number of individuals was led by (number per count hour followed by historic average): broad-tailed hummingbird (1.9/.7), yellow-rumped warbler (2.1/1.5), and dark-eyed junco (6.8/4.0). Additionally, there were better than average numbers for American crow (1.3/.7), brown creeper (.3/.1), and house sparrow (.3/.1).

Early arrivals were (observers initials are included): olive-sided flycatcher (3rd time, CL, DK, JHov), warbling vireo (6th time, MP, LMc), yellow warbler (2nd time, MP, LMc), Virginia's warbler (5th time, CL, DK, JHov), MacGillivray's warbler (3rd time including 3 out of past 4 years, MP, LMc), western tanager (2nd time and 1st time was last year, CL, DK, JHov), and black-headed grosbeak (5th time including each of past 4 years, MP, LMc, CL, DK, JHov, DH). The recent trend of seeing more long-distance migrants on the Spring Count is of interest. Dusky flycatcher also followed the trend: the 6 observed are a high for the spring, and this was only the 7th time seen.

Other good finds for the Spring Count are: western grebe (6th time, MP, LMc), northern shoveler (6th time, MP, LMc), common poorwill (1st time, MP, LMc), blue jay (2nd time, DH), and common redpoll (1st time, BD).

There were mixed results for other groups of species. Accipiters had a good spring showing, including 4 Cooper's, 3 sharp-shinned, and 2 goshawks. And the 3 turkey vultures were a good find. But there were low numbers of red-tailed hawks (5) and no golden eagles. Corvids continue to have an upward trend, being led by Steller's jay and American crow. Tree cone seedeaters were at very low numbers; only 2 red crossbills could be found.

Of course, not all was good news. Species missed include three-toed woodpecker, vesper sparrow, Lincoln's sparrow and evening grosbeak (so much for their return). Those present in well below average numbers included (number per count hour followed by historic average): tree swallow (.5/.9), mountain bluebird (.3/.6), American robin (1.9/4.0), and chipping sparrow (.1/.6).

Summer Count Summary

It was a very good breeding count. One hundred twelve species were observed, breaking the old mark of 109 seen in both 1996 and 2000. The number of individuals was average. Our effort was also outstanding; the 171 hours of field time are a record.

Summer Count Summary

Number of Species – 112 (Average – 100)
Individuals – 41 Per Hour (Average – 42)

There were many good finds. First time sightings for the spring were (observers initials are included): northern pygmy-owl (BK, GM, RT, GG, HG, BS, EE), pinyon jay (BK, GM, RT, GG, HG, BS, EE), northern mockingbird (BC), and purple finch (EH, MG, DK). Other good observations were: double-crested cormorant (3rd time, BK, GM, RT, GG, HG, BS, EE, BB, JT), blue-winged teal (2nd time, NM, MT), common merganser (4th time, MP, LMc), prairie falcon (4th time, DH, NM, MT), rufous hummingbird (6th time, MP, LMc), Lewis's woodpecker (2nd time, L&VE), Say's phoebe (2nd time, EH, MG, DK), blue jay (6th time, DH, L&VE), canyon wren (2nd time, NM, MT), sage thrasher (2nd time, DH), orange-crowned warbler (2nd time, DH), Brewer's sparrow (4th time, DH), and lesser goldfinch (4th time, DH).

I had a particular interest in the Brewer's sparrow and sage thrasher sightings. All but 1 Brewer's sparrow and both sage thrashers were seen in krummholz, just below the tundra. Other birders near treeline in other parts of Colorado observed Brewer's sparrows this summer. There is speculation that they are the race of Brewer's commonly called "timberline sparrow," and soon may be classified as a separate species. I have had sightings of Brewer's the past three Junes at Caribou Ranch, where there is a bit of big sagebrush (their most typical habitat), though I cannot say they were showing any preference toward the shrub. So those of you doing counts near treeline should learn their song and be on the look out! Do we now have a timberline thrasher as well? Bill Kaempfer and Bev Baker had sage thrasher sightings on the summer count in 1998. Another interesting bird to help spice things up.

As usual there were birds with above and below average counts. Those with a better than average showing included turkey

vulture, white-tailed ptarmigan, three-toed woodpecker, cordilleran flycatcher, Steller's jay, American crow, rock wren, ruby-crowned kinglet, hermit thrush, black-headed grosbeak, song sparrow, and house sparrow. Those with significantly below average counts were green-winged teal, northern flicker, mountain chickadee, pygmy nuthatch, American robin, western tanager, Brewer's blackbird, brown-headed cowbird, brown-capped rosy-finch, Cassin's finch, pine siskin, and evening grosbeak.

We have been observing over the years how corvids (jays, crows, ravens, magpies, nutcrackers) have been increasing, probably in relation to more homes and people within the count circle. They may eventually have adverse effects on other birds, as most members of this family are known to take eggs and young of other birds. Gene Dilworth, who works the Mountain Research Station area of the count, had an interesting observation. He first heard the scolding of a pair of black-capped chickadees, and then noticed a Clark's nutcracker poking its head into a tree cavity. The nutcracker was unsuccessful in getting any young out of the hole.

Looking Ahead

Fall Count

Count Period – September 8-23

Count Day – September 15

Winter Count

Count Period – December 15 – February 15

Count Day – January 12

Happy Birding,

Dave Hallock

2001 INDIAN PEAKS SPRING BIRD COUNT

Count day – May 5; Count period – May 1 – 14. Weather: May 2-6, snow showers and highs below 40° F; May 7-14 generally mild with highs ranging from 50° - 70° F. Twenty-two observers, 13 (of 25) areas covered. Total party hours: 65.

Western Grebe	2	Hairy Woodpecker	19	Hermit Thrush	2
Great Blue Heron	1	Northern Flicker	39	American Robin.....	127
Turkey Vulture.....	3	Olive-sided Flycatcher	2	European Starling	11
Canada Goose	4	Dusky Flycatcher.....	6	American Pipit.....	74
Mallard.....	74	Cordilleran Flycatcher	2	Virginia's Warbler.....	1
Blue-winged Teal.....	5	<i>Empidonax</i> species	1	Yellow Warbler	1
Cinnamon Teal.....	2	Warbling Vireo.....	2	Yellow-rumped Warbler.....	139
Northern Shoveler	2	Gray Jay	2	MacGillivray's Warbler.....	2
Green-winged Teal.....	3	Steller's Jay	109	Western Tanager.....	2
Ring-necked Duck.....	31	Blue Jay.....	1	Green-tailed Towhee	10
Common Merganser.....	4	Clark's Nutcracker	13	Chipping Sparrow.....	6
Osprey	2	Black-billed Magpie.....	26	Fox Sparrow	10
Sharp-shinned Hawk	3	American Crow	88	Song Sparrow	18
Cooper's Hawk	4	Common Raven.....	28	White-crowned Sparrow	8
Northern Goshawk	2	Horned Lark	15	Dark-eyed Junco	444
<i>Accipiter</i> species	1	Tree Swallow.....	34	Oregon Junco.....	(3)
Red-tailed Hawk	5	Violet-green Swallow.....	86	Gray-headed Junco	(144)
<i>Buteo</i> species.....	1	Barn Swallow	12	Black-headed Grosbeak	6
American Kestrel	1	Black-capped Chickadee	27	Red-winged Blackbird.....	34
White-tailed Ptarmigan	5	Mountain Chickadee	204	Brewer's Blackbird.....	55
Blue Grouse	2	Red-breasted Nuthatch	13	Common Grackle.....	10
Spotted Sandpiper	1	White-breasted Nuthatch.....	21	Brown-headed Cowbird.....	37
Common Snipe.....	7	Pygmy Nuthatch.....	15	Pine Grosbeak.....	6
Band-tailed Pigeon.....	12	Brown Creeper	17	Cassin's Finch	19
Mourning Dove	6	Rock Wren	1	House Finch.....	6
Common Poorwill	1	House Wren.....	24	Red Crossbill	2
Broad-tailed Hummingbird	125	American Dipper	5	Common Redpoll.....	5
Belted Kingfisher	5	Golden-crowned Kinglet	15	Pine Siskin.....	79
Williamson's Sapsucker.....	9	Ruby-crowned Kinglet	189	American Goldfinch	4
Red-naped Sapsucker.....	9	Mountain Bluebird	22	House Sparrow	20
Downy Woodpecker	7	Townsend's Solitaire.....	28		

Totals: 88 species plus 2 additional races; 2543 individuals; 39 individuals per count hour.

Participants: Linda Andes-Georges, Bev Baker, Alex Brown, Diane Brown, Beth Davis, Marty Dick, Gene Dilworth, Dave Hallock, Susan Harris, Jim Holitza, Jody Hovorka, Bill Kaempfer, Dawn Kumpli, Cherie Long, Gary Mathews, Lisa McCoy, Merle & Sally Miller, Paul Mintier, Carol Newman-Holitza, Mark Pscheid, Richard Trinkner.

2001 INDIAN PEAKS SUMMER BIRD COUNT

Count day – June 9; Count period – June 1 – July 15. Weather: June was generally mild with little precipitation; July saw the development of afternoon showers. Forty-one observers, 23 (of 25) areas covered. Total party hours 171.

Double-crested Cormorant..... 1	Three-toed Woodpecker..... 7	American Robin..... 460
Great Blue Heron..... 1	Northern Flicker..... 49	Northern Mockingbird..... 1
Turkey Vulture..... 7	Olive-sided Flycatcher..... 31	Sage Thrasher..... 2
Canada Goose..... 2	Western Wood-Pewee..... 34	European Starling..... 5
Mallard..... 80	Hammond's Flycatcher..... 11	American Pipit..... 144
Blue-winged Teal..... 2	Dusky Flycatcher..... 82	Orange-crowned Warbler..... 1
Green-winged Teal..... 9	Cordilleran Flycatcher..... 100	Virginia's Warbler..... 9
Ring-necked Duck..... 16	<i>Empidonax</i> species..... 13	Yellow Warbler..... 25
Common Merganser..... 2	Say's Phoebe..... 1	Yellow-rumped Warbler..... 428
Osprey..... 2	Warbling Vireo..... 257	MacGillivray's Warbler..... 40
Sharp-shinned Hawk..... 4	Gray Jay..... 15	Wilson's Warbler..... 319
Cooper's Hawk..... 2	Steller's Jay..... 152	Western Tanager..... 25
Northern Goshawk..... 2	Blue Jay..... 2	Green-tailed Towhee..... 70
Red-tailed Hawk..... 11	Pinyon Jay..... 1	Chipping Sparrow..... 90
<i>Buteo</i> species..... 1	Clark's Nutcracker..... 78	Brewer's Sparrow..... 3
Golden Eagle..... 3	Black-billed Magpie..... 24	Vesper Sparrow..... 10
American Kestrel..... 1	American Crow..... 99	Savannah Sparrow..... 1
Prairie Falcon..... 2	Common Raven..... 37	Fox Sparrow..... 29
White-tailed Ptarmigan..... 18	Horned Lark..... 47	Song Sparrow..... 78
Blue Grouse..... 7	Tree Swallow..... 166	Lincoln's Sparrow..... 171
Sora..... 3	Violet-green Swallow..... 134	White-crowned Sparrow..... 281
Killdeer..... 2	Cliff Swallow..... 4	Dark-eyed Junco..... 309
Spotted Sandpiper..... 17	Barn Swallow..... 45	Black-headed Grosbeak..... 71
Common Snipe..... 16	Black-capped Chickadee..... 32	Red-winged Blackbird..... 86
Band-tailed Pigeon..... 96	Mountain Chickadee..... 246	Brewer's Blackbird..... 28
Mourning Dove..... 13	Red-breasted Nuthatch..... 54	Common Grackle..... 6
Great Horned Owl..... 1	White-breasted Nuthatch..... 25	Brown-headed Cowbird..... 70
Northern Pygmy-owl..... 2	Pygmy Nuthatch..... 6	Brown-capped Rosy-Finch..... 1
Common Nighthawk..... 1	Brown Creeper..... 20	Pine Grosbeak..... 13
White-throated Swift..... 5	Rock Wren..... 39	Purple Finch..... 1
Broad-tailed Hummingbird..... 505	House Wren..... 105	Cassin's Finch..... 24
Rufous Hummingbird..... 1	American Dipper..... 7	House Finch..... 8
Belted Kingfisher..... 2	Golden-crowned Kinglet..... 40	Red Crossbill..... 44
Lewis's Woodpecker..... 1	Ruby-crowned Kinglet..... 555	Pine Siskin..... 315
Williamson's Sapsucker..... 10	Mountain Bluebird..... 54	Lesser Goldfinch..... 1
Red-naped Sapsucker..... 16	Townsend's Solitaire..... 59	Evening Grosbeak..... 2
Downy Woodpecker..... 11	Swainson's Thrush..... 27	House Sparrow..... 18
Hairy Woodpecker..... 29	Hermit Thrush..... 234	

Totals: 112 species; 6987 individuals; 41 individuals per count hour.

Participants: Linda Andes-Georges, Bev Baker, Barbara & Earl Bolton, Maggie Boswell, Diane Brown, George Coffee, Bob Cohen, Marty Dick, Gene Dilworth, Elisa Enders, Lee & Virginia Evans, Mike Figgs, Hector Galbraith, Jean-Pierre Georges, Kathleen Gibson, Maddi Goldhawk, Gregg Goodrich, Dave Hallock, Paula Hansley, Susan Harris, Elaine Hill, Jim Holitza, Steve Jones, Bill Kaempfer, Dawn Kummli, Margy Lanham, Nan Lederer, Mary Jane Makepeace, Gary Mathews, Lisa McCoy, Merle Miller, Paul Mintier, Naseem Munshi, Carol Newman-Holitza, Mark Pscheid, Bill Schmoker, Richard Trinkner, John Tumasonis, Michael Tupper.