

INDIAN PEAKS FOUR SEASON BIRD COUNTS

Spring, Summer 2005

Newsletter

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Spring Count Summary

The Spring Count saw overall numbers decline from last year but still stay above average. However, the number of species was close to the spring record.

Spring Count Summary

Number of Species

2005 – 94

Last Spring – 80

20-year Average – 83

Record – 95

Number of Individuals

2005 – 49/count hour

Last Spring – 54/count hour

20-year Average – 36/count hour

Record – 54/count hour

There were many good finds, including (name of species followed by number of times seen on Spring Count and initials of observers): wood duck (3rd time; DH), lesser scaup (5th time; MP), Franklin's gull (1st time; MP) olive-sided flycatcher (4th time; DH), Say's phoebe (3rd time; JH, M&SM), cliff swallow (5th time; MP, JH, M&SM), brown thrasher (2nd time; D&PG), MacGillivray's warbler (6th time; MP), Brewer's sparrow (1st time; BK, AB, AC, TD), savannah sparrow (6th time; DH, MP) blue jay (4th time; DH), and blue-gray gnatcatcher (1st time; MP). Yellow warbler was seen for the 7th time, with four of those spring sightings coming during the past five years.

There were a few species missed, including northern goshawk (seen on 75% of

Spring Counts) and white-tailed ptarmigan (yes, we are getting older).

Heading the list of species contributing to the lower number of birds were a group of resident species, including (name of species followed by 2005 number per count hour, 2004 number per count hour, and 20-year average): downy woodpecker (.02/.12/.07), hairy woodpecker (.19/.44/.17), Clark's nutcracker (.08/.57/.15), mountain chickadee (2.88/5.23/2.71), red-breasted nuthatch (.36/1.20/.28), pine grosbeak (.06/.20/.12), and red crossbill (.04/4.00/.24). Was the decline due to poor nesting success last year's wet and cold breeding season, or was it related to the end of the good cone crop? Several short-distance migrants also had declines from 2004, including ruby-crowned kinglet (3.73/6.22/1.91) and yellow-rumped warbler (1.98/2.80/1.11).

Several species had better than average numbers, including: red-tailed hawk (.29/.12/.12), American kestrel (.10/0.0/.02), spotted sandpiper (.13/.02/.03), broad-tailed hummingbird (2.65/2.31/.57), Williamson's sapsucker (.21/.09/.11), black-headed grosbeak (.17/.05/.01), song sparrow (.50/.40/.25), dark-eyed junco (6.76/4.02/4.11), and house finch (.48/.06/.05).

Breeding Count Summary

Our prediction for this year's breeding count was a decline due to last year's cool and wet breeding season. And it happened.

The premise we are working on is that the previous year's weather, particularly during the nesting season, has a significant influence on the following year's numbers. And that cool and wet springs and summers cause a decline while hot and dry springs and

summers cause an increase. Droughts in the west are actually the good times for most breeding birds in the high mountains. Moisture and cool temperatures appear to be the real enemies for successfully raising young for most avian species at high elevations. Within the Indian Peaks Count Circle, this relationship appears stronger in the subalpine/alpine count areas than it is for the montane areas.

Breeding Count Summary

Number of Species

2005 – 106

Last Summer – 108

20-year Average – 100

Record – 112

Number of Individuals

2005 – 44/count hour

Last Summer – 59/count hour

20-year Average – 42/count hour

Record – 59/count hour

Subalpine/Alpine Number of
Individuals

2005 – 36/count hour

Last Summer – 59/count hour

Montane Number of Individuals

2005 – 55/count hour

Last Summer – 59/count hour

The last several years fall into this statistical trap, waiting to break our bubble down the road. Last year was a record high number for observations of birds during the summer, and it had been preceded by several years of dry and warm weather. This year saw a decline that was strongest in the higher subalpine/alpine count areas. Decreasing species outnumber increasers by almost two to one. Resident birds, neotropical migrants, and short-distance migrants all succumbed. I

won't try to produce a list of decliners.

There were a few good finds. Long-eared owl was observed for the first time on the breeding count (BK, GM, MB, TD). One wonders if they are not more common than we think in the mountains. Blue-gray gnatcatcher was also observed for the first time on the breeding count (CL, BG, EH). One had also been seen on the spring count. Other good finds include double-crested cormorant (6th time; MP, LMc), common merganser (6th time; DH, MP, LMc), and Say's Phoebe (2nd time (BK, GM, MB, TD).

No brown-capped rosy-finches were observed; not sure if this is a true decliner or a sign of our own aging.

Increasers included band-tailed pigeon, yellow warbler, song sparrow, and brown-headed cowbird. Yellow warblers have been a consistent increaser.

Looking Ahead

Fall Count

Count Period – Sept. 10-25

Count Day – Sept 17

Winter Count

Count Period – Dec. 15 – Feb. 15

Count Day – January 7

Please try and stay within the count period.

Happy Birding,

Dave Hallock

2005 INDIAN PEAKS SPRING BIRD COUNT

Count day – May 7; Count period – May 1-14. Weather: May 1-7 was cool (average daily low of 26 F and average daily high of 48 F) with six days of precipitation, while May 8-14 was warmer (average daily low of 32 F and average daily high of 55 F) with one day of precipitation. Twenty-four observers, 12 (of 25) areas covered. Total party hours 52.5.

Canada Goose.....5	Northern Flicker..... 47	American Pipit..... 82
Wood Duck.....2	Olive-sided Flycatcher 2	Orange-crowned Warbler 1
Gadwall.....4	Empidonax species..... 1	Yellow Warbler 1
Mallard39	Say's Phoebe..... 1	Yellow-rumped Warbler..... 104
Blue-winged Teal8	Gray Jay 4	MacGillivray's Warbler 1
Northern Shoveler.....2	Steller's Jay 81	Green-tailed Towhee 5
Green-winged Teal2	Blue Jay..... 1	Chipping Sparrow.....26
Ring-necked Duck15	Clark's Nutcracker 4	Brewer's Sparrow..... 1
Lesser Scaup3	Black-billed Magpie..... 27	Vesper Sparrow 5
Common Merganser11	American Crow 61	Savannah Sparrow..... 7
Blue Grouse2	Common Raven..... 27	Fox Sparrow 17
Great Blue Heron.....2	Horned Lark..... 11	Song Sparrow 26
Turkey Vulture3	Tree Swallow 118	Lincoln's Sparrow 4
Osprey.....1	Violet-green Swallow 58	White-crowned Sparrow..... 13
Sharp-shinned Hawk.....1	Cliff Swallow 18	Dark-eyed Junco..... 335
Cooper's Hawk.....2	Barn Swallow..... 18	Pink-sided..... (1)
Accipiter species.....3	Swallow species 18	Gray-headed (296)
Red-tailed Hawk15	Black-capped Chickadee..... 26	Black-headed Grosbeak..... 9
American Kestrel5	Mountain Chickadee 151	Red-winged Blackbird..... 22
Killdeer2	Red-breasted Nuthatch 19	Western Meadowlark 1
Spotted Sandpiper.....7	White-breasted Nuthatch..... 13	Brewer's Blackbird..... 35
Wilson's Snipe.....9	Pygmy Nuthatch..... 28	Common Grackle 10
Franklin's Gull.....2	Brown Creeper 15	Brown-headed Cowbird 42
Band-tailed Pigeon.....29	House Wren 23	Pine Grosbeak 3
Mourning Dove.....10	American Dipper..... 3	Cassin's Finch 22
Great Horned Owl1	Golden-crowned Kinglet..... 24	House Finch 25
White-throated Swift15	Ruby-crowned Kinglet..... 196	Red Crossbill 2
Broad-tailed Hummingbird..139	Blue-gray Gnatcatcher 1	Pine Siskin..... 62
Belted Kingfisher.....3	Mountain Bluebird 26	American Goldfinch 6
Williamson's Sapsucker 11	Townsend's Solitaire..... 29	Evening Grosbeak 3
Red-naped Sapsucker.....23	Hermit Thrush 5	House Sparrow 33
Downy Woodpecker 1	American Robin 199	
Hairy Woodpecker.....10	Brown Thrasher 1	
Am. Three-toed Wood.1	European Starling..... 12	

Totals: 94 species; 2579 individuals; 49 individuals per count hour. Participants: Linda Andes-Georges, Linda Bailey, Alex Brown, Andy Cowell, Marty Dick, Todd Deininger, Mike Figgs, Jean-Pierre Georges, Doug and Pat Gibney, Bev Gholson, Audrey Godell, Maddy Goldhawk, Dave Hallock, Susan Harris, Elaine Hill, Jim Holitza, Bill Kaempfer, Dawn Kumkli, Nan Lederer, Cherie Long, Merle and Sally Miller, and Mark Pscheid.

2005 INDIAN PEAKS SUMMER BIRD COUNT

Count day: June 11; Count period: June 1 – July 15. Weather: June was cooler and wetter than normal, while the first-half of July was hot and dry. Thirty-one observers, 23 of 25 areas covered. Total party hours 129.25.

Canada Goose	16	Olive-sided Flycatcher	12	Hermit Thrush	172
Mallard	45	Western Wood-Pewee.....	21	American Robin	311
Green-winged Teal	4	Hammond's Flycatcher	8	European Starling	6
Ring-necked Duck	16	Dusky Flycatcher	64	American Pipit.....	96
Duck species	5	Cordilleran Flycatcher.....	80	Virginia's Warbler.....	1
Common Merganser	7	Empidonax species.....	6	Yellow Warbler	19
White-tailed Ptarmigan.....	7	Say's Phoebe.....	1	Yellow-rumped Warbler...	302
Blue Grouse	2	Plumbeous Vireo.....	4	MacGillivray's Warbler	36
Double-crested Cormorant....	8	Warbling Vireo	161	Common Yellowthroat	1
Great Blue Heron.....	1	Gray Jay	11	Wilson's Warbler	231
Turkey Vulture	5	Steller's Jay.....	94	Warbler species	1
Osprey.....	2	Blue Jay.....	1	Western Tanager	15
Cooper's Hawk.....	5	Clark's Nutcracker	75	Green-tailed Towhee	55
Northern Goshawk.....	1	Black-billed Magpie.....	43	Spotted Towhee.....	1
Red-tailed Hawk.....	9	American Crow	116	Chipping Sparrow.....	50
Golden Eagle	3	Common Raven.....	35	Vesper Sparrow	6
American Kestrel.....	2	Horned Lark	25	Savannah Sparrow	2
Sora.....	1	Tree Swallow	220	Fox Sparrow	49
Killdeer	1	Violet-green Swallow	86	Song Sparrow	41
Spotted Sandpiper.....	13	N. Rough-winged Sw.....	3	Lincoln's Sparrow	213
Wilson's Snipe.....	12	Cliff Swallow	10	White-crowned Sparrow...	235
California Gull.....	1	Barn Swallow.....	29	Gray-headed Junco.....	300
Rock Pigeon.....	3	Black-capped Chickadee....	24	Black-headed Grosbeak.....	33
Band-tailed Pigeon.....	76	Mountain Chickadee	201	Red-winged Blackbird.....	32
Mourning Dove.....	15	Red-breasted Nuthatch.....	44	Brewer's Blackbird.....	4
Long-eared Owl	1	White-breasted Nuthatch....	32	Common Grackle	6
Common Nighthawk.....	3	Pygmy Nuthatch.....	14	Brown-headed Cowbird	72
White-throated Swift	11	Brown Creeper	10	Pine Grosbeak	27
Broad-tld Hummingbird....	478	Rock Wren	12	Cassin's Finch	27
Rufous Hummingbird	8	House Wren	87	House Finch	17
Belted Kingfisher.....	1	American Dipper.....	10	Red Crossbill	32
Williamson's Sapsucker	4	Golden-crowned Kinglet....	40	Pine Siskin.....	292
Red-naped Sapsucker.....	12	Ruby-crowned Kinglet.....	361	American Goldfinch	10
Downy Woodpecker	10	Blue-gray Gnatcatcher	1	Evening Grosbeak	1
Hairy Woodpecker.....	25	Mountain Bluebird	50	House Sparrow	32
Am. Three-toed Wood.....	3	Townsend's Solitaire.....	30		
Northern Flicker	61	Swainson's Thrush.....	29		

Totals: 106 species; 5655 individuals; 44 individuals per count hour. Participants: Linda Andes-Georges, Bev Baker, Barbara & Earl Bolton, Maggie Boswell, Diane Brown, Robert Cohen, Todd Deininger, Marty Dick, Lee & Virginia Evans, Mike Figgs, Jean-Pierre Georges, Beverly Gholson, Dave Hallock, Paula Hansley, Susan Harris, Elaine Hill, Jim Holitza, Steve Jones, Bill Kaempfer, Nan Lederer, Cherie Long, Gary Matthews, Lisa McCoy, Merle & Sally Miller, Naseem Munshi, Carol Newman Holitza, Mark Pscheid, and Michael Tupper.