

INDIAN PEAKS FOUR SEASON BIRD COUNTS

Spring, Summer 2006

Newsletter

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Spring Count Summary

The Spring Count saw a near record number of species, while overall numbers were slightly above average, but lower than last year.

Spring Count Summary

Number of Species

2006 – 94

20-Year Average – 83

Record High – 95 (1996 & 1999)

Number of Individuals

2006 – 43 per count hour

20-Year Average – 42

Record High – 54 (2004)

The weather for the first two weeks of May was quite seasonal; precipitation and temperatures were normal. There was rain or snow on seven of the first ten days of the count period. It was not until the last half of the second week that the weather began to warm up and dry out. Saturday, May 13 was the first 70°+ day in the mountains. The Ward South group (TVZ, KG, GY, JS) went out that day and was able to pick up several good finds of migrants just returning, including: olive-sided flycatcher (5th time on Spring Count), cordilleran flycatcher (5th time), Virginia's warbler (6th time), western tanager (3rd time), and savannah sparrow (7th time).

Other good finds were: American white pelican (DB; 3rd time), American wigeon (JH, CN-H, M&SM; 5th time), warbling vireo (DH; 7th time), white-faced ibis (JH, CN-H, M&SM; 5th time), and bufflehead (JH, CN-H, M&SM; 3rd time).

The drop in the tally from last year was primarily due to lower sightings of broad-tailed hummingbird, American robin, yellow-rumped warbler, and dark-eyed junco. There

were higher than average sightings of Canada goose, tree swallow, barn swallow, corvids (particularly Steller's Jay, Clark's nutcracker, and American crow), mountain chickadee, red-breasted nuthatch, and pygmy nuthatch.

Breeding Count Summary

It was a unique summer count, and it is probable that the drought, which was more pronounced at lower elevations, had some influence. The overall numbers were average, but the number of species was high and many were unusual.

Breeding Count Summary

Number of Species

2006 – 110

20-Year Average – 100

Last Year – 104

Record High – 112 (2001)

Number of Individuals

2006 – 44 per count hour

20-Year Average – 42

Last Year – 44

Record High – 59 (2004)

Let's get right to the good stuff. Some of the best sightings were prairie warbler (1st time; DH, DB, BK [heard]), gray catbird (2nd time; DH), ovenbird (2nd time and seen in three locations; PH, GC, NS, BK, GM, JH, TD, DH), rose-breasted grosbeak (a pair hanging around a feeder for over a month; KE, MAF), Bullock's oriole (2nd time; BC), and white-winged crossbill (4th time; DH). Double-crested cormorants were seen in three locations. The Arapaho Ranch was a hot spot for rare birds, including cormorant, prairie warbler, gray catbird, rose-breasted grosbeak, and Bullock's oriole.

The tundra and krummholz also had their share of unusual sightings. My prediction heading into the breeding count

was for this to be a good year for Brewer's sparrows in the krumholz and alpine willows. And it was; 11 were seen in 6 locations, only outdone in 2002 (14 seen at 8 locations). None were seen last year. The drought seems to be playing some role. I have been following a pair in the same location weekly, but have no evidence of nesting. Sage thrashers were seen at two locations in the krumholz. A lone western meadowlark was observed singing on the tundra in mid-June; he was singing at the same location a week later.

A few species normally observed on the breeding count were missed, including Golden eagle (seen on 70% of the counts), American kestrel (70%), and belted kingfisher (only 2nd time missed; dang, I must have seen one someplace in the count circle during the six weeks).

While the overall numbers were average, there were some species with above-average counts, including rock wren, golden-crowned kinglet, ruby-crowned kinglet, hermit thrush, Virginia's warbler, yellow warbler, MacGillivray's warbler, chipping sparrow, and white-crowned sparrow. Rock wren, MacGillivray's warbler, and chipping sparrow had noticeably high counts in the subalpine; these species also had high counts in 2002, another hot and dry year.

Lower than average counts were noticeable for olive-sided flycatcher, Steller's jay, black-billed magpie, American crow, Townsend's solitaire, American robin, brown-headed cowbird, and pine siskin.

Heading into the fall and winter, be on the lookout for lots of red crossbills and some white-winged crossbills, as well as other cone seedeaters. During the first week of June we noticed plumes of pollen coming off of the Engelmann spruce trees. Large numbers of cones are now present, mostly near the tops of the trees. Subalpine fir also has a good cone crop.

Looking Ahead

Fall Count

Count Day – September 16
Count Period – September 10-24

Winter Count

Count Day – January 20
Count Period – Dec. 15 – Feb. 15

Happy Birding,

Dave Hallock

2006 INDIAN PEAKS SPRING BURD COUNT

Count day – May 6; Count period – May 1-14. Weather: normal precipitation and temperature. Thirty observers, 15 (of 25) areas covered. Total party hours: 75.75. Total party miles: 163.5.

Canada Goose.....22	Red-naped Sapsucker..... 23	Hermit Thrush 4
American Wigeon.....2	Downy Woodpecker 3	American Robin 177
Mallard69	Hairy Woodpecker 21	European Starling 11
Green-winged Teal5	Am. Three-Toed Wood. 1	American Pipit..... 98
Ring-necked Duck20	Northern Flicker..... 83	Virginia's Warbler..... 2
Bufflehead 1	Olive-sided Flycatcher 1	Yellow Warbler 4
Common Merganser3	Cordilleran Flycatcher..... 3	Yellow-rumped Warbler.... 91
Wild Turkey.....1	Empidonax species..... 1	(Myrtle) (1)
White-tailed Ptarmigan.....1	Warbling Vireo 1	Western Tanager 3
Blue Grouse10	Gray Jay 4	Green-tailed Towhee 9
American White Pelican1	Steller's Jay 128	Chipping Sparrow..... 40
Great Blue Heron.....1	Clark's Nutcracker 17	Vesper Sparrow 4
White-faced Ibis2	Black-billed Magpie..... 24	Savannah Sparrow..... 2
Turkey Vulture5	American Crow 107	Fox Sparrow 21
Osprey.....5	Common Raven..... 33	Song Sparrow 31
Sharp-shinned Hawk.....1	Horned Lark..... 4	Lincoln's Sparrow 1
Cooper's Hawk.....4	Tree Swallow 138	White-crowned Sparrow..... 27
Northern Goshawk.....2	Violet-green Swallow 45	Dark-eyed Junco..... 370
Red-tailed Hawk9	Barn Swallow..... 56	(Gray-headed)..... (303)
Golden Eagle 1	Black-capped Chickadee.... 30	Black-headed Grosbeak..... 7
American Kestrel 1	Mountain Chickadee 358	Red-winged Blackbird..... 44
American Coot.....1	Red-breasted Nuthatch 52	Western Meadowlark 2
Killdeer.....1	White-breasted Nuthatch.... 15	Brewer's Blackbird..... 30
Spotted Sandpiper2	Pygmy Nuthatch..... 52	Common Grackle 25
Wilson's Snipe..... 11	Brown Creeper 22	Brown-headed Cowbird 69
Band-tailed Pigeon.....49	Rock Wren 5	Pine Grosbeak 9
Mourning Dove.....16	House Wren 13	Cassin's Finch 18
Great Horned Owl2	American Dipper..... 9	House Finch 9
White-throated Swift7	Golden-crowned Kinglet.... 40	Red crossbill..... 12
Broad-tailed Hummingbird .58	Ruby-crowned Kinglet..... 292	Pine Siskin..... 98
Belted Kingfisher..... 1	Mountain Bluebird 65	Evening Grosbeak 2
Williamson's Sapsucker7	Townsend's Solitaire..... 45	House Sparrow 18

Totals: 94 species plus 1 additional race; 3248 individuals; 43 individuals per count hour. Participants: Linda Bailey, Bev Baker, Barbara & Earl Bolton, Alex Brown, Diane Brown, Sean Burns, Andy Cowell, Todd Deininger, Marty Dick, Kayla Evans, Mike Figgs, Maryanne Flynn, Kathy Gibson, Dave Hallock, Susan Harris, Jim Holitza, Steve Jones, Bill Kaempfer, Nan Lederer, Gary Matthews, Lisa McCoy, Merle & Sally Miller, Carol Newman-Holitza, Mark Pscheid, Brian Rasmussen, Jan Stogsdill, Tom Van Zandt, George Young.

2006 INDIAN PEAKS BREEDING BIRD COUNT

Count day – June 17; Count period – June 1 – July 15; Weather: June was warmer and drier than normal while the first two weeks of July were cooler and wetter than normal. Thirty-one observers, 23 (of 25) areas covered. Total party hours: 140.55.

Canada Goose.....2	Plumbeous Vireo..... 3	Yellow-rumped Warbler... 322
Mallard38	Warbling Vireo 205	Prairie Warbler 1
Green-winged Teal4	Gray Jay 5	Ovenbird..... 3
Ring-necked Duck 18	Steller's Jay 71	MacGillivray's Warbler 57
Common Merganser1	Clark's Nutcracker 72	Common Yellowthroat 2
White-tailed Ptarmigan 15	Black-billed Magpie..... 15	Wilson's Warbler 251
Blue Grouse2	American Crow 60	Western Tanager 21
Double-crested Cormorant.. 14	Common Raven..... 29	Green-tailed Towhee 74
Great Blue Heron.....2	Horned Lark..... 38	Spotted Towhee..... 1
Turkey Vulture4	Tree Swallow 220	Chipping Sparrow..... 94
Osprey.....3	Violet-green Swallow 118	Brewer's Sparrow..... 11
Cooper's Hawk1	N. Rough-winged Swallow .. 5	Vesper Sparrow 3
Northern Goshawk.....3	Cliff Swallow 32	Savannah Sparrow..... 2
Red-tailed Hawk8	Barn Swallow..... 46	Fox Sparrow 47
Killdeer.....2	Black-capped Chickadee.... 24	Song Sparrow 43
Spotted Sandpiper.....13	Mountain Chickadee 206	Lincoln's Sparrow 224
Wilson's Snipe..... 14	Red-breasted Nuthatch..... 52	White-crowned Sparrow... 351
Band-tailed Pigeon.....78	White-breasted Nuthatch.... 25	Gray-headed Junco 303
Mourning Dove.....22	Pygmy Nuthatch..... 42	Black-headed Grosbeak..... 24
Great Horned Owl2	Brown Creeper 21	Rose-breasted Grosbeak 2
Common Nighthawk.....4	Rock Wren 43	Red-winged Blackbird..... 45
White-throated Swift 14	House Wren 72	Western Meadowlark 2
Broad-tailed Humming.421	American Dipper..... 7	Brewer's Blackbird..... 11
Rufous Hummingbird3	Golden-crowned Kinglet.... 73	Common Grackle 10
Williamson's Sapsucker5	Ruby-crowned Kinglet..... 453	Brown-headed Cowbird 41
Red-naped Sapsucker.....17	Western Bluebird 1	Bullock's Oriole 1
Downy Woodpecker5	Mountain Bluebird 42	Brown-capped Rosy-Finch... 4
Hairy Woodpecker.....27	Townsend's Solitaire..... 22	Pine Grosbeak 23
Am. Three-toed Wood.4	Swainson's Thrush..... 18	Cassin's Finch 30
Northern Flicker52	Hermit Thrush..... 234	House Finch 8
Olive-sided Flycatcher.....9	American Robin 354	Red Crossbill..... 83
Western Wood-Pewee21	Gray Catbird..... 2	White-winged Crossbill..... 3
Hammond's Flycatcher..... 14	Sage Thrasher..... 2	Pine Siskin..... 218
Dusky Flycatcher93	American Pipit 123	American Goldfinch 2
Cordilleran Flycatcher 74	Orange-crowned Warbler.... 1	Evening Grosbeak 7
Empidonax species7	Virginia's Warbler 14	House Sparrow 29
Say's Phoebe..... 1	Yellow Warbler..... 35	

Totals: 110 species; 6161 individuals; 44 individuals per count hour. Participants: Bev Baker, Earl & Barbara Bolton, John & Willi Brocklehurst, Diane Brown, George Coffee, Bob Cohen, Todd Deininger, Kayla Evans, Lee & Virginia Evans, Mike Figgs, Laura Fisher, Maryanne Flynn, Dave Hallock, Paula Hansley, Jack Harlan, Jim Holitza, Steve Jones, Bill Kaempfer, Nan Lederer, Cat Luna, Gary Matthews, Lisa McCoy, Merl Miller, Naseem Munshi, Mark Pscheid, Robin Sell, Natalie Shrewsbury, Michael Tupper.