

# INDIAN PEAKS BIRD COUNTS

Summer 2020

Newsletter

Vol.39 No.2

## Breeding Count Summary

In terms of number of birds per count hour, this was a little below average but better than last year. Number of species was slightly above average and slightly better than last year.

May, June and July had below average precipitation and above average temperatures. The subalpine and tundra had about average snowpack, so there was typical timing of arrival and nesting. In the montane, there was no delay in commencement of nesting activities. And there were few interruptions to the nesting process due to weather. (My theory says this leads to increased nesting success this year and higher numbers next year - hah!)

## Breeding Count Summary

### Number of Species

2020 – 108

30-Year Average – 102

Last Year – 106

Record High – 112 (2001)

Record Low – 88 (1984)

### Number of Individuals

2019 – 40 per count hour

30-Year Average – 44

Last Year – 33

Record High – 59 (2004)

Record Low – 31 (1982)

The decent overall count was spearheaded by Broad-tailed Hummingbirds, as they were the most numerous species on the count. Over the 39-years of the count, there is an indication that they have been an increaser; we observed about 250 per 100 count hours during the first 20 years and about 350 per 100 count hours for the past 19 years.

Other abundant species are noted in the following list. They represent our ambient background sounds and sights as they comprised almost 50% of total birds seen on the count this year.

Red Crossbill is on the list this year as

the abundant cone-crop on multiple conifer species has brought them in; there is evidence they nested locally, likely over the winter, as juveniles were being seen in April and May.

## 2020

### Top 10 Species

Broad-tailed Humm. ....	540
American Robin.....	374
Dark-eyed Junco.....	353
Ruby-crowned Kinglet ....	249
Red Crossbill .....	224
Yellow-rumped Warbler....	204
Mountain Chickadee.....	199
Pine Siskin .....	167
Lincoln's Sparrow.....	164
Warbling Vireo.....	152

It seems a bit odd having Lincoln's Sparrow on the list as they are restricted in habitat to willow carrs and other riparian areas. But they have good densities in those habitats and their song is very conspicuous. It could also be related to where there is trail and road access and where we bird.

Other species with much better than average numbers included Turkey Vulture, Mourning Dove, Great Horned Owl, Rufous Hummingbird, Hairy Woodpecker, Horned Lark, Red-breasted Nuthatch, Pygmy Nuthatch, Yellow Warbler, MacGillivray's Warbler, Black-headed Grosbeak, and Chipping Sparrow.

Pygmy Nuthatch is of interest. We saw around 13 per 100 count hours during the first 20 years and almost 30 per 100 count hours the past 19 years. They have been regularly seen in the lower elevation count areas like Sugarloaf, the lower portions of the Ward count areas, and Rollinsville. It has been interesting to watch their presence increase in the valley between Nederland and Eldora. Few were seen in the Nederland/Arapaho Ranch/Tucker/Eldora count areas until around 1989, when they became more regular in Tucker, Arapaho Ranch and Nederland count areas, all below Eldora, where they were seen irregularly (only 5 times in 37 years). Over the last 10 years they have been

detected more between Nederland and Eldora and are now becoming regular in Eldora.

As always, there were some good finds. A first time find for the Breeding Count is Canvasback, seen at Caribou Ranch. Other good finds included Lesser Scaup (5th time on Breeding Count, all since 2002; Brainard North), Wild Turkey (5th time, all since 2008; Tucker, Rollinsville, Eldora, Nederland, Caribou Ranch), Pied-billed Grebe (5th time, 3 of 5 sightings in last 4 years; South St. Vrain), Calliope Hummingbird (2nd time; Sugarloaf), American Coot (7th time, first time since 1992; Rollinsville), Gray Catbird (5th time, 4 of 5 sightings since 2004; Sugarloaf), White-winged Crossbill (7th time, seen last Fall and Winter counts, so 3 counts in a row; Caribou), Yellow-headed Blackbird (3rd time; Nederland), and Lazuli Bunting (6th time: Rollinsville and Ward North).

Wild Turkey is an addition to the count's landscape. In the early 1980s it was thought that the primary flocks were near Kossler Lake (Flagstaff Drive) and on Heil Valley Ranch. They have greatly expanded their range further up in elevation in western Boulder County.

Species normally seen over 50% of the time but missed this year included Green-winged Teal (this is 6th Breeding Count in a row

they have not been seen), Ring-necked Duck, White-throated Swift, Northern Rough-winged Swallow, Spotted Towhee, Savannah Sparrow, and Evening Grosbeak.

Species making a poor numeric showing were all *accipiters*, Band-tailed Pigeon, Dusky Flycatcher, Swainson's Thrush, and Fox Sparrow.

Our field effort - 139 hours - was excellent. There is no loss of effort for the Breeding Count. We continue to pick up some new participants to supplement us old-timers with some fresh legs and young ears. I am also starting to pull more data from eBird.

As always, thanks for your continued participation.

### **Looking Ahead**

<p><b>Fall Count</b></p>
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<p>Count Day - September 12</p>
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<p>Count Period - September 5-20</p>
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Happy Birding,  
Dave Hallock

## 2020 INDIAN PEAKS BREEDING BIRD COUNT

Count day – June 20; Count period – June 1 – July 15; Weather: warmer and drier than normal; May had been warm and dry. Thirty-eight observers, 19 (of 25) areas covered. Total party hours: 139.

Canada Goose.....42	Olive-sided Flycatcher ..... 13	Hermit Thrush..... 144
Mallard .....73	Western Wood-Pewee..... 25	American Robin ..... 374
Canvasback.....5	Hammond’s Flycatcher ..... 8	Gray Catbird..... 2
Lesser Scaup .....2	Dusky Flycatcher ..... 24	European Starling..... 2
duck species.....2	Hammonds/Dusky Fly. .... 1	House Sparrow ..... 15
Common Merganser .....3	Cordilleran Flycatcher ..... 58	American Pipit ..... 41
Wild Turkey.....23	flycatcher species..... 11	Pine Grosbeak ..... 22
White-tailed Ptarmigan.....4	Plumbeous Vireo..... 1	Brown-capped Rosy-Finch. 42
Dusky Grouse .....8	Warbling Vireo ..... 152	House Finch ..... 14
Pied-billed Grebe.....1	Canada Jay ..... 20	Cassin's Finch..... 33
Band-tailed Pigeon .....18	Steller’s Jay..... 78	Red Crossbill ..... 224
Eurasian-collared Dove .....2	Blue Jay..... 1	White-winged Crossbill..... 5
Mourning Dove .....39	Clark’s Nutcracker ..... 71	Pine Siskin..... 167
Common Nighthawk.....1	Black-billed Magpie..... 62	Lesser Goldfinch ..... 6
Calliope Hummingbird.....3	American Crow ..... 92	American Goldfinch..... 4
Rufous Hummingbird..... 14	Common Raven ..... 62	Chipping Sparrow ..... 97
Broad-tailed Humming. ....540	Horned Lark..... 25	Brewer's Sparrow ..... 3
American Coot.....5	Tree Swallow ..... 138	Fox Sparrow ..... 15
Wilson's Snipe ..... 11	Violet-green Swallow ..... 140	Dark-eyed Junco..... 353
Spotted Sandpiper..... 15	Barn Swallow..... 41	White-crowned Sparrow .. 141
Double-crested Cormorant...8	Cliff Swallow ..... 64	Vesper Sparrow ..... 4
Great Blue Heron.....1	swallow species..... 5	Song Sparrow ..... 42
Turkey Vulture .....15	Black-capped Chickadee.... 31	Lincoln's Sparrow..... 164
Osprey .....2	Mountain Chickadee ..... 199	Green-tailed Towhee ..... 64
Bald Eagle .....1	Red-breasted Nuthatch..... 83	Yellow-headed Blackbird.... 2
Sharp-shinned Hawk.....1	White-breasted Nuthatch.... 31	Red-winged Blackbird..... 75
<i>Accipiter</i> species .....1	Pygmy Nuthatch ..... 88	Brewer's Blackbird..... 1
Red-tailed Hawk ..... 11	Brown Creeper ..... 11	Common Grackle ..... 12
Golden Eagle ..... 1	Rock Wren ..... 11	Brown-headed Cowbird .... 22
Great Horned Owl .....5	House Wren ..... 98	Virginia’s Warbler..... 2
Belted Kingfisher.....1	American Dipper..... 10	MacGillivray's Warbler ..... 45
Williamson’s Sapsucker ..... 12	Golden-crowned Kinglet.... 19	Yellow Warbler ..... 38
Red-naped Sapsucker .....20	Ruby-crowned Kinglet..... 249	Yellow-rumped Warbler... 204
Am. 3-toed Woodpecker.....8	Western Bluebird ..... 4	Wilson’s Warbler ..... 75
Downy Woodpecker .....15	Mountain Bluebird ..... 49	Western Tanager ..... 30
Hairy Woodpecker.....53	Townsend’s Solitaire ..... 35	Black-headed Grosbeak..... 37
Northern Flicker .....48	Veery..... 1	Lazuli Bunting..... 2
American Kestrel.....1	Swainson’s Thrush..... 11	

Totals: 108 species; 5557 individuals; 40 individuals per count hour. Participants: Linda Andes-Georges, Bev Baker, Maureen Blackford, Alex Brown, Diane Brown, Gillian Brown, Jack Bushong, Ryan Bushong, George Coffee, Todd Deininger, \*Andy Dorsey, \*David Dowell, Virginia Evans, Mike Figgs, Audrey Godell, Dave Hallock, Dave Hill, Elaine Hill, Jim Holitza, Steve Jones, Nan Lederer, Greg Massey, Eliza Maxfield, Holden Maxfield, Mary Maxfield, Lisa McCoy, \*Loren Merrill Naseem Munshi, Carol Newman-Holitza, Mark Pscheid, Jeannie Reynolds, \*David Schiff, Cara Stiles, Lucy Stroock, Mike Tupper, Susan Wagner, Marty Wolf, and Patty Zishka.

\* - from eBird