



# Utah County Birders Newsletter

February 2023

## CONTENTS:

- [Monthly Meeting](#)
  - [Upcoming Field Trips](#)
  - [President's Message](#)
  - [Bird of the Month](#)
  - [Field Trip Reports](#)  
*\*UPDATE\**
  - [Backyard Birds](#)
- 

## FEBRUARY MEETING:

**Wednesday Feb 15<sup>th</sup> \*\*NOTE DIFFERENT NIGHT THAN USUAL\*\***

7pm at BYU Bean Museum and online via Zoom

## **Tips and Tricks to Flocking Around in Yellowstone**

Presented by Zach Hutchinson

Flockingaround.com

@flockingaround

Yellowstone National Park is every wildlife-lovers dream place. Being such a unique ecosystem attracts an amazing variety of wildlife, including over 300 species of birds! Zach Hutchinson, of FlockingAround.com, will provide insight on maximizing birding experiences during all seasons in Yellowstone.



## **FIELD TRIPS:**

Saturday FEB 4<sup>th</sup> 9:00am to Noon: **UTAH LAKE STATE PARK**

Come join us at the State Park and let's see what good birds we can find! You will need a State Park pass or pay for a day pass at the kiosk to enter the park. If you have a State Parks pass and would allow others to carpool in with you or would like to carpool in to share the cost, meet at the Provo River Parkway parking lot right outside the state park. If you can't meet to carpool meet in the parking lot by the administration building (lighthouse building). We will bird until around noon.

Friday FEB 24<sup>th</sup> 8:00am: **DELTA SNOW GOOSE FESTIVAL**

Meet at the Payson Walmart at 8am to the west of the Quick Quack car wash. We will drive to Gunnison Bend Reservoir to see the Snow Geese and other waterfowl. Bring a lunch! Please carpool if possible.

---

## **President's Message – Feb 2023**

By Yvonne Carter

One of the best ways to know the Creator is to see, observe, and enjoy His creations. This is what happens when we get out there and enjoy and watch these wonderful, awesome birds.

Sometimes birds can teach a lesson or two. A while back I was watching the weather and hurried to get my walk in before a storm started. I usually walk 2-3 miles a day and this day was getting a little blustery before the storm hit, so I hurried on my route and noticed the birds were really active. As I approached my home, I couldn't help but notice a flurry of birds in the yard. It was more than a flurry! I had some species that I don't have very often. More than 30 starlings on our east lawn, pecking at the grass, all sorts of birds at the four feeders front and back yards, and a lot of birds flying around. I had 15-17 species during that short time! They knew the signs that a storm was approaching, and they wanted to be ready. I wonder if humans can take a lesson from what we see in nature. Likewise, do we see warning signs and prepare? Something to think about.

Happy birding!  
Yvonne

For Birding Suggestions for our "ODD" Year click [here](#)

---

## BIRD OF THE MONTH

Ruby-crowned Kinglet  
*Corthylio calendula*

Article and photos by Asher Lee, age 14

The **Ruby-crowned Kinglet** is a cute, cheeky, small bird that often frequents coniferous forests across the United States. The kinglet is an olive-green round ball of fluff with a prominent broken white eye ring and white wing bar. Weighing in at a tiny 5 to 10 grams and with an 18 cm wingspan, it is the sixth smallest bird in North America which makes it smaller than three of the hummingbird species (though some individual birds may vary in size). The male kinglet has a bright red crown that only shows when singing, agitated or as a part of his mating display.



The Ruby-crowned Kinglet is also a very energetic bird. They are often identified by the constant flitting of their wings as if they've had one too many Red Bulls. When feeding they are often seen hanging upside down or doing other acrobatic maneuvers.



The “King” will only feed on the finest food which means spiders, insects and the occasional serving of fruit. Kinglets mainly eats insects in the summer and enjoy a diet of fruit and seeds in the winter. They can also be seen sallying like flycatchers snatching their meals in the air. In the winter I often spot these birds at my bird feeders eating suet or black oil sunflower seeds.

The Ruby-crowned Kinglet is often heard before it is seen with its high-pitched call. These songs consist of thin high notes mixed in with chattering along with another call that is made up of a series of chits. It's hard to believe that this noisy song can come from such a small bird.

The female of this species will make her cup-shaped nest alone. The nest is often 40 to 90 feet off the ground and is made up of spider webs, pine needles, moss, and twigs. Surprisingly this tiny bird will lay up to 12 eggs in a clutch. After about two weeks the eggs will hatch, and 12 new kinglets come into the world filling the forest with cheeky birdsongs.



Sources:

[https://www.allaboutbirds.org/guide/Ruby-crowned\\_Kinglet/id](https://www.allaboutbirds.org/guide/Ruby-crowned_Kinglet/id)

<https://www.audubon.org/field-guide/bird/ruby-crowned-kinglet>

[\[See past Bird of the Month articles\]](#)

---

## FIELD TRIP REPORTS:

### Hollow Park Fieldtrip

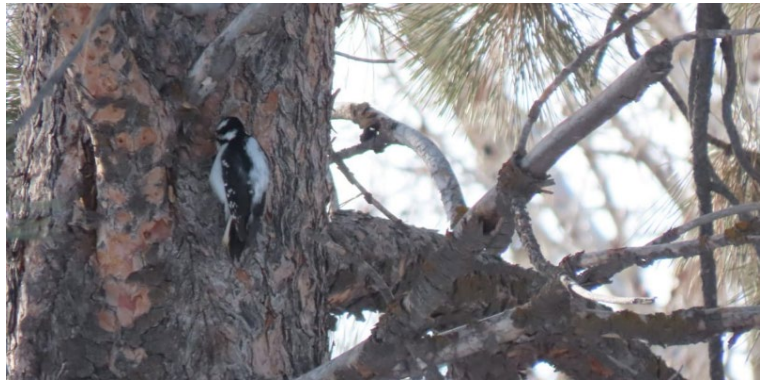


Photos by Suzi Holt

We had a great turn out for our first fieldtrip of 2023!!

Saturday January 7<sup>th</sup>, we met at 9 am at the Hollow Park in Payson. Everyone was dressed up warm for the 29° weather! We began our walk with a couple **Stellar's Jays**, they have been in the park gathering acorns for a few months. A fun sight to see. Rob spotted a **Black-billed Magpie**. A few **European Starlings**, **Eurasian-collard Doves**, and some **Woodhouse's Scrub Jays** were added. We had a **Townsend's Solitaire** at the top of an aspen tree. A few **American Robins** flew over.

There was a lone **House Finch** and a few **Lesser Goldfinch** in the trees by a feeder. As we walked south down the trail a few saw and heard some **California Quail**, we were able to call in a few happy **Black-capped Chickadees**. Looking west through the trees, we saw a flock of **Cedar Waxwings**, more American Robins, a couple **Spotted Towhees**, **Dark-eyed Juncos**, and a **Downy Woodpecker**.



I heard a laughing call, and my brain went to Juniper Titmouse but after hearing it a few more times, it hit me...it was a **White-breasted Nuthatch**!!

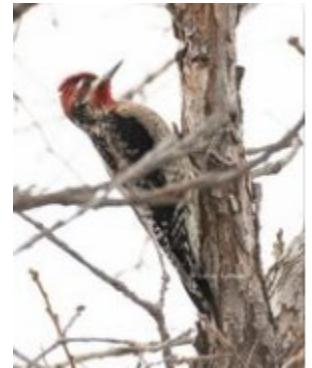


Kaylene's son lives along the edge of the park, Tuesday she had filled the feeders, so there were lots of **House Sparrows**, a Woodhouse's Scrub Jay, a Black-capped Chickadee and a couple **White-crowned Sparrows**.

As we got to the southern end of the park we saw more Cedar Waxwings, a **Red-naped Sapsucker**, **Wild Turkeys**, a **Northern Flicker**, more House Finch, Woodhouse's Scrub and Stellar's Jays, Eurasian Collared Doves, and American Robins. As we were walking back, we heard honking as a flock of **Canada Geese** flew over.



**\*\*UPDATE ON THIS SAPSUCKER:** This is a hybrid **Red-breasted/Red-naped Sapsucker**, not a Red-naped Sapsucker. Thanks to KC Childs for the identification: The extensive red in the crown, nape, and face point to a hybrid. (Photo to the right by Esther Sumner)



Two **Great-horned Owls** were spotted as well!!



We did find 3 Woodpecker sp. **DOWNY** Woodpecker, Red-naped Sapsucker, and a Northern Flicker! We had a great morning with 25 total species! Thanks for joining us!

## Raptor Route Field Trip



Photos by Suzi Holt

Wednesday January 18<sup>th</sup>, 19 Birders in 11 cars met and 9 am in Payson and headed for our first area in Genola. Our first bird was a **Red-tailed Hawk**, followed by an **American Kestrel**. We also saw some **Eurasion-collard Doves**, **European Starlings** and **Northern Flickers**. We then stopped to see a pair of **Great-horned Owls**!

A little farther down the road was a beautiful **Merlin**! I never tire of seeing them in the winter!

We passed lots more Red-tailed Hawks, American Kestrels, **House Sparrows**, **Dark-eyed Juncos**, a couple **Canada Goose**, **White-crowned Sparrows**, **Black-billed Magpie**, **Rock Pigeons**, **Brewer's** and **Red-winged Blackbirds**.

Along Warm Springs WMA we saw lots of **American Robins**, a couple **Spotted Towhees**, Black-billed Magpie, another American Kestrel, White-crowned and **Song Sparrows**.

As we drove down through Goshen we added a couple more Red-tailed Hawks, a few more Blackbirds, Eurasion-collard Doves, European Starlings, and a White-crowned Sparrow.

We got onto Goshen Bay Road and added **6 Northern Harriers**, and **3 Bald Eagles**. A flock of **Horned Larks** in the field, and a flock of eleven **Mountain Bluebirds** flew by and landed along the fence line. A few **Common Ravens** flew by as well.

As we neared the second bank of silver maples, I noticed a large raptor on the side of the road in the grass. I didn't want to stress it or spook it, so I asked my trusty scope buddies Amanda and KC to get on it. It was a juvenile **Bald Eagle**. We stayed back and watched it for a few minutes. A couple times it flapped its wings to no avail to get off the ground. This beautiful, majestic bird was in trouble, it needed HELP!! I decided to go try to find a box back in town that we could transport it in. I ran into the Sherriff, and he contacted DWR. KC and Amanda continued on with the fieldtrip. After finding out that help was on the way I grabbed Amanda and the kiddos and we went back to wait. When we got back the Eagle was not where we'd left it. We drove up and down the road looking everywhere for it. We thought well maybe it flew off.

I was on the phone with Jeff Cooper, and he'd asked if I had checked all the bushes. We turned around for another pass and Amanda spotted it over the fence line by a sage brush. It was in the muck in a cow pasture. At first glance it looked as if we were too late, I truly believed it was dead. My heart just broke. By then hours had passed. While I was talking to Jeff, we saw a slight movement of



1/24/23:



Suzi Holt shared a post.  
Admin · 19h · 🌐



Great news!! What a amazing week!



Debbie Souza-Pappas

20h · 🌐

Second Chance Wildlife Rehabilitation

An update on our lead poisoning Bald Eagle. These videos were taken this evening during our last feeding. He's a force to be reckoned with. He is doing well and has been on his two day break of chelation treatments. Tomorrow, they start again.

There are more updates on our Facebook page, [Utah County Birders](#)

Anyone is welcome to share this post and let's help spread the word! I'm grateful that our Raptor Route led us to this Eagle and pray the treatments will take effect! Bless your heart Debbie!!

If you would like to donate to Second Chance Wildlife Rehabilitation here is the link

<https://wildliferehabprice.wixsite.com/2ndchance>

---



## Back Yard Birds

**Noel Zaug** – Springville: I was visited by a **Hermit Thrush** on January 22, yard bird #106. (It helps to have a stream running through the yard!) A **Sharp-shinned Hawk** had just been here, so the usual crowd of sparrows, juncos and finches was largely absent, or I might never have noticed this quite and shy visitor.

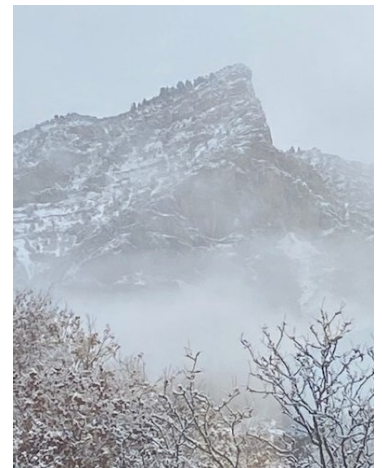


**Paul Killpack** – Lindon: 47 **Bohemian Waxwings** – lifer yard birds in a tree right above the deck! The photo isn't great but made for an easy ID.

**Suzi Holt** – Sand Hollow, Utah Jan 26th: This isn't Utah County because we are down in Sand Hollow this week, but today "Mr. Rhodie", the neighborhood **Greater Roadrunner** paid us a visit! He was in and out of the yard so fast there was no time for photo, but so fun to see!

**KC Childs** – Orem: I've thoroughly enjoyed watching the **Bohemian Waxwings** that are around daily. They were a first in the yard this year, and I will be sad when they start their journey back north.

**Machelle Johnson** – Provo: I live in Orem, but I work at BYU. My office has two walls of windows, one faces east, and I have a beautiful view of Squaw Peak. On the 23<sup>rd</sup> I saw 2 **Golden Eagles** soaring against that backdrop. On the 24<sup>th</sup> a large mixed flock of **Bohemian** and **Cedar Waxwings** landed in the tree outside my window! My work yard bird list is up to 37!



**Kay Stone** – Lehi: This month I have had **Cedar Waxwings** once, and often **Scrub Jays**, **Downey Woodpecker**, **Ruby-crowned Kinglet**, **Red-winged Blackbird**, and the usual sparrows, finches and both species of goldfinches.