



August 2025

UTAH COUNTY BIRDERS NEWSLETTER

CONTENTS:

- [Monthly Meeting, Announcements](#)
- [President's Message](#)
- [Upcoming Field Trips](#)
- [Bird of the Month](#)
- [Field Trip Reports](#)
- [Art Gallery](#)
- [Backyard Birds](#)



AUGUST MEETING

Thursday August 14, 2025, 7pm to dark

It's our annual potluck time! This year we are hosting our August potluck in a brand new park in Provo- the Provo River Delta Gateway Park. The address is 311 Lakeshore Dr, Provo, east of and across Lakeview Pkwy from the new Skipper Bay trailhead.

(Here: https://maps.app.goo.gl/4yPjHLFVj19x3dQG6?g_st=com.google.maps.preview.copy).

Bring a potluck item to share, bring your family, (kids/grandkids welcome!) and join us as we break bread and have a fun evening of socializing. The park has three brand new playgrounds, bathrooms, and a covered picnic area. If we have light/time at the end we may pop over to the Skipper Bay trail and do a little birding while we are there.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

We are still in the hot part of summer, and it can be a busy, or crazy or just stuck at home with a 'project' that is occupying your time and can't leave. That's the way it is with me right now as I am renovating a part of our home; in which I have had a paint brush in my hand for the entire week -- 6 days! Ugh! But thank goodness I just finished the painting phase. But I was still able to do some quick "5 minute" birding on our Facebook Page, the 'Utah County Birders' page.

Even with paint on my hands, I found time to relax for a short while, take a break and get on our Facebook page to see what is happening and enjoy seeing what you birders are finding. I have found our Facebook to be informative in many ways. Simple things like sharing the great pictures or noticing that someone is asking for suggestions for good hotspots for birding near Santaquin.

I noticed that Dena Reid entered information on their hummingbirds and the feeders. Someone shared what they observed at the Bear River Migratory Refuge which is very helpful for anyone thinking of birding there now. And there are always requests for help in identifying a bird they saw.

So, I say, thank goodness for our Facebook site.

Keep on birding! Yvonne Carter, President

UPCOMING FIELD TRIPS

SATURDAY AUG 9 – Goshen Bay, Goshen Fields, Warm Springs

We will meet at the Payson Wal-Mart to the west of the car wash at 7:00 AM.

We will be walking a mile out to the shoreline at Goshen Bay to see what shorebirds are hanging around, and any other migrants may be around. It is a mile walk each way, with little shade, but hopefully early morning will help with the heat. If you can bring a scope, it will be helpful. Also wear pants, and close toed shoes for the walk, as there are some weeds along the trail that can cause some discomfort if in shorts. Please bring water also.

Afterwards we will check Goshen fields and see what is hanging around, and finish up at Warm Springs for migrants, and any local breeders. Hopefully the trip will be finished around 1 P.M.

SATURDAY AUG 23 – River Lane, Sandy Beach

We will meet at Springville Wal-Mart just to the east of the fuel center at 7:00 A.M.

We will head over to River Lane, and Sandy Beach to look for migrants, shorebirds, and local birds that are hanging around. We will be walking part of the lane and beach area. It's possible to see or hear 60 species this time of year. Afterwards, we will go down Swede Lane to also check for any birds that are on the move. We should hopefully be done by noon.

BIRD OF THE MONTH

Lazuli Bunting

Passerina amoena

Article by Paul Killpack

Photos by Esther Sumner



One spring day years ago, before I was interested in birding, I was running on the trails near Dry Canyon near my home and saw a bird singing its heart out on the top of a bush. As I drew closer, I started to make out the remarkable coloration of the bird – different than any that I had noted before. I was astonished at the beautiful bright blue on its head and back, the light rusty breast, white belly, and the conspicuous white wing bars. I took a picture with my phone assuming that I must have run across some exotic species of bird as I had no idea that we had such colorful birds in Utah. Of course, a quick google search upon returning home yielded my find to be a fairly common bird – the Lazuli Bunting. I consider this encounter to be my spark bird and have loved seeing them return to my running trails each year, marking to me the official arrival of spring.

The Lazuli Bunting is named for the gemstone lapis lazuli which is a deep-blue metamorphic rock used as a semi-precious stone that has been prized since antiquity for its intense color. Beads of lapis lazuli can actually be found in the mask of King Tut! As is often seen in birds, it is the males that have the bright coloration. The female has a similar overall size and appearance but with a drab grayish-brown coloration although still typically retaining blue coloration in the tail. They can be confused with bluebirds but are smaller in size with wing bars and a short and conical bill typical of buntings.

Lazuli Buntings are typically confined to the western United States spending breeding season from southern Canada to Northern Arizona and New Mexico, and, fortunately for us, centered right on Utah. In Utah, they are rare in March, becoming uncommon in April, and then common May through July. They begin to leave in August becoming uncommon again and then rare in October. They migrate largely to Mexico with a few still seen in southeastern Arizona throughout the winter. Despite being a western bird, vagrants have been seen in most states in the US.

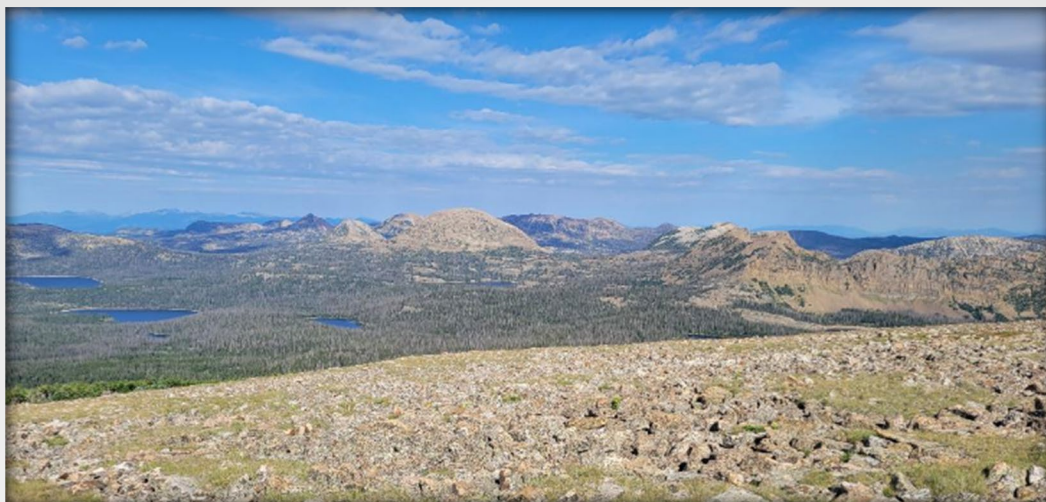
Sibley notes that they are common in any brushy or weedy habitat, especially along streams in arid regions. They commonly share habitat with Black-headed Grosbeaks. The males reach the breeding territories prior to the females and spend a lot of time singing from a high perch. Their song is a high, sharp warble and their call is a dry pik both of which average slightly higher and longer than Indigo Buntings.

I have never noticed their nests but Wikipedia notes that they make a loose cup nest of grasses and rootlets placed in a bush, usually just 1-4 feet off the ground. They lay three or four pale blue eggs with an incubation period of 11-13 days followed by a fledging period of 10-12 days. They gather in small flocks and tend to move up in elevation after breeding to hunt for insects and search for seeds. The Birds of Utah Field Guide notes that they have increased in population and expanded in range over the last 100 years.



References: Sibley, David Allen. Sibley Birds West; Tekiela, Stan. Birds of Utah Field Guide; Evans, Keith and Martinson, Wayne. Utah's Featured Birds and Viewing Sites.; Wikipedia. Lazuli Bunting

Unita Mountains, Tuesday July 22, 2025



On July 22nd a group of 8 Utah County birders headed up to the Uinta mountains to do some hiking and see what exciting birds we could find. We started off early in the morning and drove up to the Bald Mountain trailhead. We started out up towards Bald Mountain to look for any fun mountain birds, and possibly White-tailed Ptarmigan. The elevation took a toll on some of us and high winds on the peak kept us hanging below the peak, but despite the setbacks, we were treated to some fun birds on the rock field below the summit. We had a beautiful adult **Black-rosy Finch**. **Mountain Bluebirds** fluttered around for our enjoyment. We were also treated to breeding **American Pipits**, which is always fun to see. Some in the group got to see a **Rock Wren**. However, we were unable to find a ptarmigan. We all hiked back down to the parking lot where we were greeted with a **Three-toed Woodpecker**, which was a lifer for several in the group.



American Three-toed Woodpecker

We then drove over to the Highline Trail near Mirror Lake to see if we could see some of the mountain specialties that the Unitas are known for. We hiked down the trail and hit a fun pocket of birds. We had multiple **Three-toed Woodpeckers**, a **Williamson Sapsucker**, and a calling pair of **Pine Grosbeaks**. It was great to find some more lifers for people on the trip. We also ran into other mountain birds like **Mountain Chickadee**, **Cassin's Finch**, **Lincoln's Sparrow**, **Western Tanager**, and **Yellow-rumped Warblers**. Unfortunately, we struck out on Canada Jays.



Female Williamson's Sapsucker



White-crowned Sparrow

We ended the trip eating lunch at Moosehorn Lake. We had a fun group of mountain birds, including another Three-toed Woodpeckers to entertain us while we ate. It was a wonderful trip, and great company. Hopefully we will see some of you out for our August field trips, as migration will be in full swing.



ART GALLERY

Lynn Garner: A Wood Duck cross-stitched by his wife,
and a Bluebird birthday cake made by his daughter-in-law for his birthday!



Backyard Birds

No submissions this month