



Field Guides Tour Report

Colorado Grouse II 2014

Apr 13, 2014 to Apr 23, 2014

Eric Hynes & Jesse Fagan

For our tour description, itinerary, past triplists, dates, fees, and more, please [VISIT OUR TOUR PAGE](#).

We all know there is no such thing as the "perfect tour," but we sure had fun pursuing that goal. In the end, very few challenges presented themselves and all of our principal targets fell into place. We can't even complain about the weather. All in all, it was a fantastic trip, and Jesse and I truly enjoyed traveling with all of you.

We settled into our first hotel in Pueblo after a white-knuckle drive from Denver. Thankfully, the snowstorm which caused the twelve car pile-up that first afternoon was the only noteworthy weather event of the tour.

Our first full day of birding from Pueblo to Lamar was very productive. We saw a number of species we never encountered again on the tour: Mountain Plover, Curve-billed Thrasher, Scaled Quail, Baird's Sandpiper, and Willet.

Fred Dorenkamp of Arena Dust Tours brought us to our first lek: Lesser Prairie-Chickens. After the remarkable display, we devoured a classic chuck wagon breakfast prepared by Fred's delightful wife, Norma. The rest of the day we spent birding our way north to Wray. Bob Bledsoe gave us a memorable introduction after negotiating a significant detour.

The Greater Prairie-Chickens did not disappoint, nor did the birding from Wray to Evans. We studied McCown's Longspurs very closely in the Pawnee Grasslands and got our first of many good looks at Pronghorn. The marsh at the southern end of Lower Latham Reservoir in the afternoon hosted great birds like Cinnamon Teal, displaying Northern Harriers, Black-necked Stilts, and our only White-faced Ibis.

After stuffing ourselves at Marion's of the Rockies in Idaho Springs, we bundled up and climbed our way to 12,000 feet at Loveland Pass. Jesse was the hero that morning when he picked out a single White-tailed Ptarmigan. The frenzy of new species at the feeders in Silverthorne was highlighted by Brown-capped and Gray-crowned rosy-finches.

Our two nights in Gunnison felt luxurious and greatly expanded our checklist. Beyond the endangered Gunnison Sage-Grouse, we encountered American Dipper, Peregrine Falcon, Barrow's Goldeneye, and a host of other specialties.

For geology buffs, Black Canyon of the Gunnison National Park and Colorado National Monument were probably the most interesting sites we visited. It didn't hurt that we picked up remarkably cooperative Dusky Grouse, Chukar, Fox Sparrow, Black-throated Sparrow, White-throated Swift, and Bewick's Wren at these locations.

Sharp-tailed Grouse took the gold medal for their amazing performance outside of Craig, and after a seven Moose afternoon we wrapped things up with Greater Sage-Grouse. Other end-of-the-tour highlights were American Three-toed Woodpecker, Williamson's Sapsucker, the duck bonanza at Walden Reservoir, and a pair of Prairie Falcons at their nest site.

Jesse and I kept remarking about what a great group of people we were birding with throughout the tour. Thanks for making our jobs easy and even more of a blast than usual. I hope we get to bird together again sooner rather than later.

Take care and be well,

--Eric



We enjoyed jaw-dropping looks at this displaying male Dusky Grouse in Black Canyon of the Gunnison National Park. (Photo by guide Eric Hynes)

One of the following keys may be shown in brackets for individual species as appropriate: * = heard only, I = introduced, E = endemic, N = nesting, a = austral migrant, b = boreal migrant

BIRDS

Anatidae (Ducks, Geese, and Waterfowl)

- CANADA GOOSE** (*Branta canadensis*) – No big flocks but almost an everyday bird
WOOD DUCK (*Aix sponsa*) – A tough species to pick up along our route but we had a few in a farm pond south of Wray
GADWALL (*Anas strepera*) – Plenty of great looks, most days
AMERICAN WIGEON (*Anas americana*) – Not as common as some of the other dabblers but we saw them on multiple occasions
MALLARD (*Anas platyrhynchos*) – An everyday bird
BLUE-WINGED TEAL (*Anas discors*) – Good looks about every other day
CINNAMON TEAL (*Anas cyanoptera*) – More common during the second half of the tour, our first looks were at Lower Latham Reservoir
NORTHERN SHOVELER (*Anas clypeata*) – Nearly an everyday bird
NORTHERN PINTAIL (*Anas acuta*) – Uncommon compared to the other dabblers
GREEN-WINGED TEAL (AMERICAN) (*Anas crecca carolinensis*) – Seen more days than not
CANVASBACK (*Aythya valisineria*) – Our best looks were at Walden Reservoir
REDHEAD (*Aythya americana*) – Our high count for this species was at Walden Reservoir as well
RING-NECKED DUCK (*Aythya collaris*) – Good looks at several locations
LESSER SCAUP (*Aythya affinis*) – Almost an everyday bird
BUFFLEHEAD (*Bucephala albeola*) – Seen regularly but never in big numbers
COMMON GOLDENEYE (*Bucephala clangula*) – Our high count was at Blue Mesa Reservoir
BARROW'S GOLDENEYE (*Bucephala islandica*) – It took some doing but eventually everyone got this striking diver at Blue Mesa Reservoir.
HOODED MERGANSER (*Lophodytes cucullatus*) – Just two individuals but it made the list
COMMON MERGANSER (*Mergus merganser*) – We saw them daily during the second half of the tour
RED-BREASTED MERGANSER (*Mergus serrator*) – Jesse picked out a hen on Lake Henry and there were just a few more after that
RUDDY DUCK (*Oxyura jamaicensis*) – By the thousands on Lake Meredith

Odontophoridae (New World Quail)

- SCALED QUAIL** (*Callipepla squamata*) – Only fleeting glimpses unfortunately our first morning
GAMBEL'S QUAIL (*Callipepla gambelii*) – Lake Sweitzer State Park produced our first good look but quite a few were around the entrance to Colorado National Monument

Phasianidae (Pheasants, Grouse, and Allies)

- CHUKAR** (*Alectoris chukar*) – We were pleasantly surprised to see a pair sunning on a ledge just after sunrise in Colorado National Monument. [I]
RING-NECKED PHEASANT (*Phasianus colchicus*) – A few in the Lamar area [I]
GREATER SAGE-GROUSE (*Centrocercus urophasianus*) – The grand finale outside of Walden
GUNNISON SAGE-GROUSE (*Centrocercus minimus*) – We enjoyed a better than average show from the blind for this rare and declining species
WHITE-TAILED PTARMIGAN (*Lagopus leucura altipetens*) – Great spotting Jesse! Lucky for us the weather was uneventful at Loveland Pass.
DUSKY GROUSE (*Dendragapus obscurus obscurus*) – You just can't ask for a better show than we got at Black Canyon of the Gunnison National Park.
SHARP-TAILED GROUSE (*Tympanuchus phasianellus columbianus*) – Voted the favorite species of the tour -- the lek was incredible: foot stomping, tail shaking, spinning, chasing... the works!
GREATER PRAIRIE-CHICKEN (PINNATUS) (*Tympanuchus cupido pinnatus*) – Bob Bledsoe is almost as memorable as the birds. Listening to the males was even better than watching them for some people.
LESSER PRAIRIE-CHICKEN (*Tympanuchus pallidicinctus*) – Fred and Norma Dorenkamp helped us launch our great adventure with this very rare and declining species.
WILD TURKEY (*Meleagris gallopavo*) – We spotted a roadside flock shortly after heading north from Lamar

Gaviidae (Loons)

- COMMON LOON** (*Gavia immer*) – We saw a distant bird at Blue Mesa Reservoir and a couple more on Sweitzer Lake.

Podicipedidae (Grebes)

- PIED-BILLED GREBE** (*Podilymbus podiceps*) – Single birds most days toward the end of the tour
EARED GREBE (*Podiceps nigricollis*) – A striking bird in breeding plumage; they were abundant at Walden Reservoir
WESTERN GREBE (*Aechmophorus occidentalis*) – Numerous in several locations
CLARK'S GREBE (*Aechmophorus clarkii*) – Much less common than Western, but we got good looks

Phalacrocoracidae (Cormorants and Shags)

- DOUBLE-CRESTED CORMORANT** (*Phalacrocorax auritus*) – Walden Reservoir held our high count

Pelecanidae (Pelicans)

- AMERICAN WHITE PELICAN** (*Pelecanus erythrorhynchos*) – The soaring birds overhead at Lake Henry were memorable.

Ardeidae (Herons, Egrets, and Bitterns)

GREAT BLUE HERON (*Ardea herodias*) – We came across an individual or two most days

GREAT EGRET (*Ardea alba*) – Bob pointed out a bird in flight at Lower Latham Reservoir.

Threskiornithidae (Ibises and Spoonbills)

WHITE-FACED IBIS (*Plegadis chihi*) – A solo bird in flight at Lower Latham Reservoir turned out to be our only bird of the trip.

Cathartidae (New World Vultures)

TURKEY VULTURE (*Cathartes aura*) – If it wasn't for the snowstorm on our first afternoon, this would have been an everyday species

Pandionidae (Osprey)

OSPREY (*Pandion haliaetus*) – Do you remember that colossal nest on a pole when we were approaching Silverthorne our last day?

Accipitridae (Hawks, Eagles, and Kites)

GOLDEN EAGLE (*Aquila chrysaetos*) – Always a treat to see this majestic raptor

NORTHERN HARRIER (*Circus cyaneus*) – We witnessed a prey exchange between a pair over the marsh on the south side of Lower Latham Reservoir.

SHARP-SHINNED HAWK (*Accipiter striatus*) – Just one overhead bird at Colorado National Monument

COOPER'S HAWK (*Accipiter cooperii*) – Several toward the end of the tour

BALD EAGLE (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*) – Good looks at several nests

SWAINSON'S HAWK (*Buteo swainsoni*) – We were able to study the high degree of plumage variation this *Buteo* exhibits.

RED-TAILED HAWK (*Buteo jamaicensis*) – An everyday bird with many incubating birds on nests

FERRUGINOUS HAWK (*Buteo regalis*) – After pulling over for our first Rough-legged Hawk, we had one zip straight over us in the high wind.

ROUGH-LEGGED HAWK (*Buteo lagopus*) – We had good looks on the plains and up in North Park

Rallidae (Rails, Gallinules, and Coots)

VIRGINIA RAIL (*Rallus limicola*) – A grunting response at Sweitzer Lake [*]

AMERICAN COOT (*Fulica americana*) – Almost an everyday bird

Gruidae (Cranes)

SANDHILL CRANE (*Grus canadensis*) – Quite a few pairs up in the Yampa Valley but the most memorable couple was just outside Gunnison (right Brian?).

Recurvirostridae (Stilts and Avocets)

BLACK-NECKED STILT (*Himantopus mexicanus*) – An elegant shorebird seen well at Lower Latham Reservoir

AMERICAN AVOCET (*Recurvirostra americana*) – The sexual dimorphism in bill shape was evident among the birds along the edge of Lake Henry.

Charadriidae (Plovers and Lapwings)

KILLDEER (*Charadrius vociferus*) – More days than not

MOUNTAIN PLOVER (*Charadrius montanus*) – We picked out several of these subtle beauties hunkered down in the snow our first morning out of Pueblo.

Scolopacidae (Sandpipers and Allies)

GREATER YELLOWLEGS (*Tringa melanoleuca*) – It was great to observe that dark, coarsely marked bird in high breeding plumage at Lower Latham Reservoir.

WILLET (WESTERN) (*Tringa semipalmata inornata*) – An obliging individual at Lake Henry was a good pick up for mid-April.

LESSER YELLOWLEGS (*Tringa flavipes*) – Good looks at Lower Latham Reservoir

LONG-BILLED CURLEW (*Numenius americanus*) – Dried up Bonny Lake was pretty quiet but it was a pleasant surprise to pull out a small flock of these hefty shorebirds on our way out.

BAIRD'S SANDPIPER (*Calidris bairdii*) – Three birds at Lake Henry were the vanguard of spring migration.

LEAST SANDPIPER (*Calidris minutilla*) – A single bird at Sweitzer Lake was our only encounter with this widespread species.

WILSON'S SNIPE (*Gallinago delicata*) – Steve did a great job of spotting our first at Lower Latham Reservoir

Laridae (Gulls, Terns, and Skimmers)

BONAPARTE'S GULL (*Chroicocephalus philadelphia*) – A few in flight out over Lake Meredith were the only ones of the tour

FRANKLIN'S GULL (*Leucophaeus pipixcan*) – They were most conspicuous in southeastern Colorado along the Arkansas River drainage

RING-BILLED GULL (*Larus delawarensis*) – An every other day bird

CALIFORNIA GULL (*Larus californicus*) – Walden Reservoir held a sizable breeding colony

Columbidae (Pigeons and Doves)

ROCK PIGEON (*Columba livia*) – An everyday bird [I]

BAND-TAILED PIGEON (*Patagioenas fasciata*) – We were lucky to catch the first few returning migrants at the feeders in Silverthorne

EURASIAN COLLARED-DOVE (*Streptopelia decaocto*) – This exotic is now well-established across the state

MOURNING DOVE (*Zenaida macroura*) – Somehow we missed this species on day 6

Strigidae (Owls)

GREAT HORNED OWL (*Bubo virginianus*) – The pale gray morph bird brooding on the nest just south of Walden sticks out in my memory.

BURROWING OWL (*Athene cunicularia*) – We enjoyed good looks at several locations in SE Colorado.

Apodidae (Swifts)

WHITE-THROATED SWIFT (*Aeronautes saxatalis*) – You can't ask for a better view of this dynamic flier than we savored along the cliffs of Colorado National Monument.

Trochilidae (Hummingbirds)

BLACK-CHINNED HUMMINGBIRD (*Archilochus alexandri*) – A brief look at a perched bird before it zipped away in Colorado National Monument

Alcedinidae (Kingfishers)

BELTED KINGFISHER (*Megaceryle alcyon*) – A chattering individual at the McCabe Lane Wetland outside Gunnison

Picidae (Woodpeckers)

LEWIS'S WOODPECKER (*Melanerpes lewis*) – Never taking a break, Jesse pulled out a cooperative bird way across the street from our pit stop in Buena Vista.

WILLIAMSON'S SAPSUCKER (*Sphyrapicus thyroideus*) – Saving one of the best birds for last, we picked up this gem at Genesee Park just before returning to Denver.

RED-NAPED SAPSUCKER (*Sphyrapicus nuchalis*) – That scarlet throat was a beacon on the bird that swooped just above Jesse's head

DOWNY WOODPECKER (*Picoides pubescens*) – Just a few

HAIRY WOODPECKER (ROCKY MTS.) (*Picoides villosus orius*) – We had great looks at this Rocky Mountains subspecies with clean black wings in Silverthorne.

AMERICAN THREE-TOED WOODPECKER (ROCKY MTS.) (*Picoides dorsalis dorsalis*) – The extensive white back of this Rocky Mountains race was obvious on the bird we celebrated in Gould.

NORTHERN FLICKER (YELLOW-SHAFTED) (*Colaptes auratus auratus*) – A few out on the eastern plains

NORTHERN FLICKER (RED-SHAFTED) (*Colaptes auratus cafer*) – Most of the Northern Flickers we encountered were this subspecies.

Falconidae (Falcons and Caracaras)

AMERICAN KESTREL (*Falco sparverius*) – A common roadside raptor throughout the tour

MERLIN (*Falco columbarius*) – We had fleeting looks early and late in the tour

PEREGRINE FALCON (*Falco peregrinus*) – One of what seemed like many new species we turned up in a short time at the McCabe Lane Wetland

PRAIRIE FALCON (*Falco mexicanus*) – Another pit stop pick-up; on the last day no less

Tyrannidae (Tyrant Flycatchers)

EASTERN PHOEBE (*Sayornis phoebe*) – Not surprisingly, hanging around a little bridge after leaving the Dorenkamps

SAY'S PHOEBE (*Sayornis saya*) – A few scattered sightings

Laniidae (Shrikes)

LOGGERHEAD SHRIKE (*Lanius ludovicianus*) – It was a pleasure seeing a fair number on our first couple days of the tour

Corvidae (Crows, Jays, and Magpies)

GRAY JAY (ROCKY MTS.) (*Perisoreus canadensis capitalis*) – This was an unexpected find in State Forest State Park

PINYON JAY (*Gymnorhinus cyanocephalus*) – This flocking corvid was easy to come by in Colorado National Monument.

STELLER'S JAY (INTERIOR) (*Cyanocitta stelleri macrolopha*) – This handsome jay was most cooperative in Silverthorne.

BLUE JAY (*Cyanocitta cristata*) – We picked up a few in Holly.

WESTERN SCRUB-JAY (WOODHOUSE'S) (*Aphelocoma californica woodhouseii*) – Most sightings were in Black Canyon of the Gunnison National Park.

BLACK-BILLED MAGPIE (*Pica hudsonia*) – We saw many approaching and leaving Craig

CLARK'S NUTCRACKER (*Nucifraga columbiana*) – Good looks in Silverthorne

AMERICAN CROW (*Corvus brachyrhynchos*) – Almost an everyday bird but less numerous here than other regions of the country

COMMON RAVEN (*Corvus corax*) – Nearly a daily occurrence

Alaudidae (Larks)

HORNED LARK (*Eremophila alpestris*) – This widespread species was common out on the eastern plains but we had them up at Loveland Pass as well.

Hirundinidae (Swallows)

TREE SWALLOW (*Tachycineta bicolor*) – Plenty along the way

VIOLET-GREEN SWALLOW (*Tachycineta thalassina*) – We enjoyed wonderful views along the cliffs in Colorado National Monument

BARN SWALLOW (*Hirundo rustica*) – About an every other day bird

Paridae (Chickadees and Tits)

BLACK-CAPPED CHICKADEE (*Poecile atricapillus*) – We came across a few each time we entered the forested mountains

MOUNTAIN CHICKADEE (*Poecile gambeli*) – The feeders in Silverthorne attracted several individuals. That light supercilium gives them a fierce look.

JUNIPER TITMOUSE (*Baeolophus ridgwayi*) – We watched an adult gathering food for what sounded like a begging juvenile hidden nearby.

Aegithalidae (Long-tailed Tits)

BUSHTIT (INTERIOR) (*Psaltriparus minimus plumbeus*) – Not colorful in plumage but certainly in personality

Sittidae (Nuthatches)

RED-BREASTED NUTHATCH (*Sitta canadensis*) – We had a very responsive individual up at Rabbit Ears Pass.

WHITE-BREASTED NUTHATCH (*Sitta carolinensis*) – This guy got off the "dirty bird" list at the cabins in Gould.
PYGMY NUTHATCH (*Sitta pygmaea*) – Not their usual m.o., several birds were foraging on the ground at Genesee Park

Troglodytidae (Wrens)

ROCK WREN (*Salpinctes obsoletus*) – Colorado National Monument is a reliable spot for this vocal species.
CANYON WREN (*Catherpes mexicanus*) – We heard several singing birds but never laid eyes on one. [*]
MARSH WREN (INTERIOR WEST) (*Cistothorus palustris plesius*) – McCabe Lane Wetland held a cooperative bird.
BEWICK'S WREN (*Thryomanes bewickii*) – A very territorial bird came way down off the hillside to challenge "Jesse."

Poliophtilidae (Gnatcatchers)

BLUE-GRAY GNATCATCHER (*Poliophtila caerulea*) – Just a couple of individuals in the western part of the state

Cinclidae (Dippers)

AMERICAN DIPPER (*Cinclus mexicanus*) – The bridge over the Gunnison River on our way to Crested Butte proved reliable once again.

Regulidae (Kinglets)

RUBY-CROWNED KINGLET (*Regulus calendula*) – Heard singing up at Rabbit Ears Pass [*]

Turdidae (Thrushes and Allies)

WESTERN BLUEBIRD (*Sialia mexicana*) – Picked this one up at our last stop: Genesee Park
MOUNTAIN BLUEBIRD (*Sialia currucoides*) – An everyday roadside bird once we entered the Rockies
TOWNSEND'S SOLITAIRE (*Myadestes townsendi*) – Our best looks were at the Crow Valley Campground
AMERICAN ROBIN (*Turdus migratorius*) – An everyday bird

Mimidae (Mockingbirds and Thrashers)

CURVE-BILLED THRASHER (EASTERN) (*Toxostoma curvirostre oberholseri*) – We had good looks at multiple pairs at our first stop east of Pueblo
SAGE THRASHER (*Oreoscoptes montanus*) – The most cooperative birds were along the north side of Blue Mesa Reservoir.
NORTHERN MOCKINGBIRD (*Mimus polyglottos*) – En route to the Dorenkamps was the first sighting but the singing bird at the entrance to Colorado National Monument was the most memorable.

Sturnidae (Starlings)

EUROPEAN STARLING (*Sturnus vulgaris*) – Yep [I]

Motacillidae (Wagtails and Pipits)

AMERICAN PIPIT (*Anthus rubescens*) – That lone bird working the shoreline of the roadside pond south of Wray turned out to be our only sighting.

Bombycillidae (Waxwings)

CEDAR WAXWING (*Bombycilla cedrorum*) – In the town of Holly our second morning

Calcariidae (Longspurs and Snow Buntings)

MCCOWN'S LONGSPUR (*Rhynchophanes mccownii*) – We had many uncooperative flocks of longspurs on our Route 385 detour trying to get north to Wray but killer looks were had at the Pawnee Grasslands.

Parulidae (New World Warblers)

YELLOW-RUMPED WARBLER (MYRTLE) (*Setophaga coronata coronata*) – McCabe Lane Wetland held a couple in the cottonwoods
YELLOW-RUMPED WARBLER (AUDUBON'S) (*Setophaga coronata auduboni*) – A few really bright birds around the Doubletree Hotel pond
BLACK-THROATED GRAY WARBLER (*Setophaga nigrescens*) – Some really nice looks at newly arriving birds in Colorado National Monument

Emberizidae (Buntings and New World Sparrows)

SPOTTED TOWHEE (*Pipilo maculatus*) – Black Canyon of the Gunnison National Park is a stronghold for this species.
AMERICAN TREE SPARROW (*Spizella arborea*) – A lingering migrant was working the shrubs near the Gunnison Sage-Grouse blind.
CHIPPING SPARROW (*Spizella passerina*) – Another bird first encountered in Colorado National Monument
VESPER SPARROW (*Poocetes gramineus*) – The bird singing its heart out directly in front of us at the Sharp-tailed Grouse lek was special.
BLACK-THROATED SPARROW (*Amphispiza bilineata*) – A singing male at the entrance to the Colorado National Monument was a treat.
SAVANNAH SPARROW (*Passerculus sandwichensis*) – We saw a few out on the plains at the start of the tour
FOX SPARROW (SLATE-COLORED) (*Passerella iliaca schistacea*) – The campground at Black Canyon of the Gunnison National Park remains a reliable spot for this species.
SONG SPARROW (*Melospiza melodia*) – We only came across a few of this widespread species
WHITE-CROWNED SPARROW (GAMBEL'S) (*Zonotrichia leucophrys gambelii*) – Numerous in some areas, particularly on the eastern plains
DARK-EYED JUNCO (SLATE-COLORED) (*Junco hyemalis hyemalis*) – In the Rockies in a few places
DARK-EYED JUNCO (PINK-SIDED) (*Junco hyemalis mearnsi*) – This beautiful subspecies was most conspicuous in Colorado National Monument.
DARK-EYED JUNCO (GRAY-HEADED) (*Junco hyemalis caniceps*) – This subspecies is distinguishable from the very similar "Red-backed" subspecies by its solid pink bill.

Icteridae (Troupials and Allies)

RED-WINGED BLACKBIRD (*Agelaius phoeniceus*) – Plenty every day
WESTERN MEADOWLARK (*Sturnella neglecta*) – A very common bird in parts of Colorado
YELLOW-HEADED BLACKBIRD (*Xanthocephalus xanthocephalus*) – We ran into this species at a number of locations but none were as

noteworthy as the tree full of males at Walden Reservoir.

BREWER'S BLACKBIRD (*Euphagus cyanocephalus*) – Teased out a few in the southeast but best looks were roadside near the campground at Blue Mesa Reservoir

COMMON GRACKLE (BRONZED) (*Quiscalus quiscula versicolor*) – Plenty

GREAT-TAILED GRACKLE (*Quiscalus mexicanus*) – Only in the southeast

BROWN-HEADED COWBIRD (*Molothrus ater*) – Scattered sightings, never numerous

Fringillidae (Siskins, Crossbills, and Allies)

GRAY-CROWNED ROSY-FINCH (HEPBURN'S) (*Leucosticte tephrocotis littoralis*) – We observed one (possibly two) "gray-faced" Rosy-Finch on the feeders at Silverthorne. This subspecies is migratory and breeds at elevation in the coastal ranges from California to Alaska.

GRAY-CROWNED ROSY-FINCH (GRAY-CROWNED) (*Leucosticte tephrocotis tephrocotis*) – This subspecies is widespread and highly migratory in the inland continental mountain ranges. We were lucky to pick out one on the tray feeders in Silverthorne among the many Brown-capped Rosy-Finches.

BROWN-CAPPED ROSY-FINCH (*Leucosticte australis*) – We were able to study this near-endemic to Colorado at length at the feeders at Silverthorne. Interestingly, none were present when we revisited the site a week later.

HOUSE FINCH (*Haemorhous mexicanus*) – Fairly common around communities out on the plains and at lower elevations.

CASSIN'S FINCH (*Haemorhous cassinii*) – These occurred at higher elevations in the conifer forests. We had a bunch on the feeders in Mount Crested Butte.

RED CROSSBILL (*Loxia curvirostra*) – Their distinctive call note gave them away up at Rabbit Ears Pass.

PINE SISKIN (*Spinus pinus*) – Almost an everyday bird once we got into the Rockies

AMERICAN GOLDFINCH (*Spinus tristis*) – A few here and there out on the plains

EVENING GROSBEEK (*Coccothraustes vespertinus brooksi*) – We enjoyed good numbers this year up at Silverthorne. These Rocky Mountains birds sound noticeably different than the subspecies in the east.

Passeridae (Old World Sparrows)

HOUSE SPARROW (*Passer domesticus*) – An everyday bird [I]

MAMMALS

NUTTALL'S (MOUNTAIN) COTTONTAIL (*Sylvilagus nuttalli*) – The rabbits at Black Canyon of the Gunnison National Park

DESERT COTTONTAIL (*Sylvilagus audubonii*) – Common east of the Rockies

WHITE-TAILED JACKRABBIT (*Lepus townsendi*) – Most sightings were up in the North Park area

BLACK-TAILED JACKRABBIT (*Lepus californicus*) – One passed through the Lesser Prairie-Chicken lek

LEAST CHIPMUNK (*Tamias minimus*) – Lots running around up in Black Canyon of the Gunnison National Park

YELLOW-BELLIED MARMOT (*Marmota flaviventris*) – Good looks at several on the drive back from Crested Butte

WYOMING GROUND SQUIRREL (*Spermophilus elegans*) – A number of colonies on the west side of the state

ROCK SQUIRREL (*Spermophilus variegatus*) – Great looks at this handsome small mammal in Black Canyon of the Gunnison National Park

GOLDEN-MANTLED GROUND SQUIRREL (*Spermophilus lateralis*) – Jesse made a new friend on the shores of Blue Mesa Reservoir

BLACK-TAILED PRAIRIE DOG (*Cynomys ludovicianus*) – The widespread animal on the eastern plains

WHITE-TAILED PRAIRIE DOG (*Cynomys leucurus*) – The ones with the darker face on the west side of the state

GUNNISON PRAIRIE DOG (*Cynomys gunnisoni*) – We saw some near Gunnison -- surprise, surprise

FOX SQUIRREL (*Sciurus niger*) – The large, reddish tree squirrel we saw on a couple of occasions in suburban areas

RED SQUIRREL (*Tamiasciurus hudsonicus*) – Not as reddish as animals in the eastern population, we saw several of these guys in the conifer stands.

ORD'S KANGAROO RAT (*Dipodomys ordii*) – The little guys hopping across the dirt road en route to leks in the east

MUSKRAT (*Ondatra zibethica*) – At Lower Latham Reservoir

RED FOX (*Vulpes vulpes*) – We probably had four or five sightings by less than the whole group over the course of the tour

COYOTE (*Canis latrans*) – Our first was shortly after leaving Denver International Airport

ELK (*Cervus canadensis*) – We saw over 100 Elk driving from the city of Gunnison to the Black Canyon of the Gunnison National Park.

MULE DEER (*Odocoileus hemionus*) – Hundreds

WHITE-TAILED DEER (*Odocoileus virginianus*) – Only on our way to Lamar

MOOSE (*Alces alces*) – We spotted seven on our afternoon drive in North Park! It was interesting to learn that they were never native to Colorado, but rather an introduced population for hunting.

PRONGHORN (*Antilocapra americana*) – One of the fastest animals in the world and definitely not an antelope

BIGHORN SHEEP (*Ovis canadensis*) – Seen well in Colorado National Monument

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

Totals for the tour: 166 bird taxa and 24 mammal taxa