



Field Guides Tour Report

Oregon: From the Coast to the Cascades 2019

Sep 4, 2019 to Sep 14, 2019

Cory Gregory

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It's hard to narrow down the best scenery on this Oregon tour. Between the coast, the Cascades, and the wide expanses of the Malheur NWR area, there's a lot to choose from! Certainly the Oregon Coast made a good case for some of the most breathtaking landscapes. Photo by guide Cory Gregory.

From the crashing waves and Surfbirds hopping from rock to rock, to the Pinyon Jays walking amongst the pine needles, to the Sagebrush Sparrow that peeked at us from atop a sage, this tour covered an amazing array of habitats, birds, plants, and animals. And don't forget the great food, famous wine, and world-class views and scenery! This tour had a long list of highlights and I want to thank all of you for coming; it was a fun trip thanks to the fun group!

Right off the bat we were surrounded by new sights and sounds. Fern Ridge Reservoir was alive with shorebirds, ducks, and great side-by-side comparisons of Western and Clark's grebes. Meanwhile, a Black-throated Gray Warbler flitted overhead, Acorn Woodpeckers made a fuss, and Bewick's Wrens and Spotted Towhees stayed low. Up on Marys Peak in the afternoon, this stop gave us some stellar highlights like Mountain Quail (woohoo!) and a gorgeous Varied Thrush!

Out along the coast, we enjoyed some fresh seafood, views of Gray Whales, Black Oystercatchers, a myriad of alcids like Marbled Murrelet, Pigeon Guillemot, Common Murre, Cassin's Auklet, and more! We got to study the differences of the three cormorants, scoped some Harlequin Ducks, looked for Wrentits along the coastal scrub, and spent some time reviewing our gull identifications. The scenery was outstanding too! Lighthouses, fog horns, the busy flocks of Black Turnstones and Surfbirds, Harbor Seals curiously looking at us, the Oregon coast is just an outstanding place.

Once inland, our good birding continued in places like Roseburg where California Scrub-Jays and Anna's Hummingbirds kept a close eye on us, American Dippers dipped into rivers in the foothills, and a Red-breasted Sapsucker found us at a rest area! But the crowning jewel was Crater Lake. Of course, the weather had us concerned but by the time we left the Clark's Nutcrackers along the rim, the clouds had lifted just in time for us. Amazing!

Birding around Bend and Sisters had a different feel; we were well away from the moist, coastal forests and what awaited for us was also quite different. We successfully tracked down White-headed Woodpeckers, Red Crossbills, and even a fantastic flock of Pinyon Jays! Townsend's Solitaires sang at Tumalo Reservoir, we scoped an impressive array of ducks from Hatfield Lake near Bend, and the Vaux's Swift roost was something we'll not soon forget. We stood amazed as 1400+ of these tiny swifts swirled and then dropped into a single chimney to roost of the night.

After we left the Three Sisters in their beautiful morning light, we headed east where we stopped in at the Brothers Rest Area, Chickahominy Reservoir, and eventually the wet fields south of Hines. New species were waiting for us including a Sagebrush Sparrow en route, White-faced Ibis at Chickahominy, and Sage Thrashers south of Hines.

The area around Malheur National Wildlife surely hosts some of the most interesting birding in the west. The headquarters area is a famous migrant trap and the birding there was outstanding. California Quail scuttled around, a fine diversity of warblers and flycatchers were tanking up for migration, and we even had a bonus Merlin, Western Tanager, and some flyby American White Pelicans. Later, at the Page Springs Campground, we saw the local rarity, the Phainopepla, in a state where they're not supposed to be! We added a Hutton's Vireo there too which was quite notable. We then made our way up Steens Mountain where Prairie Falcons, Golden Eagles, and outstanding scenery was the norm. Kiger Gorge was breathtaking, Rock Wrens hopped about, and Pine Siskins busily fed on the endemic thistles. We closed out our birding the following morning to the sound of Canyon Wren songs bouncing down the canyon walls, the rare Black-backed Woodpecker stealthily coming out of the woodwork, and even a sneaky Ruffed Grouse high up on Horsepasture Mountain. What a finish!

I want to thank you all for coming to Oregon with Field Guides this year. I certainly had a blast and a big reason for that was you; what a fun group! Oregon really is an amazing place and I'm glad we got to explore so much of it together. Hopefully you'll have fond memories of all the unique birds we saw, the great food we enjoyed, and the beautiful scenery that makes Oregon such a treasure.

Until next time, good birding to you all!

- Cory

KEYS FOR THIS LIST

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*) – A few of these white-cheeked geese were seen in wet areas throughout the tour at places like Fern Ridge WMA.

WOOD DUCK (*Aix sponsa*) – We looked down into Myrtle Point Marsh where this attractive species was seen swimming in the wetland.

CINNAMON TEAL (*Spatula cyanoptera*) – At this time of year, even the males are rather dull brown in plumage. Like the previous species, we saw this at Myrtle Point Marsh en route to Roseburg.

NORTHERN SHOVELER (*Spatula clypeata*) – This is another dabbling duck that we tallied and we even got to see the large, spatulate bill.

GADWALL (*Mareca strepera*) – We visited Hatfield Lake near Bend where we saw a few of these dabblers swimming out in the pond.

AMERICAN WIGEON (*Mareca americana*) – A few of these were scoped out in Tumalo Reservoir near Bend one morning.

MALLARD (*Anas platyrhynchos*) – A classic dabbling, these were common in lakes and ponds throughout.

NORTHERN PINTAIL (*Anas acuta*) – A slim-necked dabbling, a few of these were scoped out on the mudflats at the Hatfield Marine Science Center in Newport.

GREEN-WINGED TEAL (*Anas crecca*) – This is the smallest dabbling species in the world. Lucky for us, we found a couple in a beachside pond at Ona Beach State Park.

RING-NECKED DUCK (*Aythya collaris*) – This is a diving duck related to scaup, Canvasback, and Redhead. Our only ones came from Hatfield Lake near Bend.

HARLEQUIN DUCK (*Histrionicus histrionicus*) – This gorgeous, rock-loving duck was in somewhat muted colors at this season. Still, we tallied some near Yaquina Head north of Newport.

SURF SCOTER (*Melanitta perspicillata*) – This dark-winged scoter was seen offshore at Boiler Bay on our first full day along the coast. The males had that very distinctive black-and-white pattern on the head.

WHITE-WINGED SCOTER (*Melanitta deglandi*) – A few of these dark seaducks were mixed in with a huge raft of Surf Scoters offshore from the Sea Lion Point viewpoint.

BLACK SCOTER (*Melanitta americana*) – All dark with an orange knob on the bill, these seaducks were seen only from Face Rock Wayside.

BUFFLEHEAD (*Bucephala albeola*) – A female was swimming just offshore from the south end of Diamond Lake near Crater Lake.

BARROW'S GOLDENEYE (*Bucephala islandica*) – Like the previous species, this little diving duck was scoped on Diamond Lake where we got to study the bill structure.

HOODED MERGANSER (*Lophodytes cucullatus*) – Our first of these kept pace with the van as we drove near Fern Ridge Reservoir on our first day.

RUDDY DUCK (*Oxyura jamaicensis*) – These small ducks, sometimes called “stiff tails”, were seen at Hatfield Lake near Bend.

Odontophoridae (New World Quail)

MOUNTAIN QUAIL (*Oreortyx pictus*) – What luck! We drove up Marys Peak on our first afternoon and found a couple of these skulkers right on the road! This is a really tough species to find and we were all quite happy about seeing a target like this right off the bat.

CALIFORNIA QUAIL (*Callipepla californica*) – This fancy quail was first seen from Perkins Peninsula Park but we ended up seeing them fairly regularly throughout the trip, especially around Hines where they were fond of the parking lot of our hotel!

Phasianidae (Pheasants, Grouse, and Allies)

RUFFED GROUSE (*Bonasa umbellus*) – Our slow drive up Horsepasture Mountain on our final day yielded a fun encounter with this cryptic species! Sometimes you just get lucky!

WILD TURKEY (*Meleagris gallopavo*) – Pete spotted several of these big guys as we drove uphill towards Crater Lake.

Podicipedidae (Grebes)

- PIED-BILLED GREBE** (*Podilymbus podiceps*) – This widespread but small species of grebe was seen at Fern Ridge, offshore the Perkins Peninsula.
- RED-NECKED GREBE** (*Podiceps grisegena*) – Although we first found these offshore near Newport, we found another one at Chickahominy Reservoir where it's quite rare.
- EARED GREBE** (*Podiceps nigricollis*) – They weren't in their sharpest plumage but these tiny grebes were still distinctive at spots like Diamond Lake and Chickahominy Reservoir.
- WESTERN GREBE** (*Aechmophorus occidentalis*) – We were lucky to be able to study this species, along with the following species, at the Perkins Peninsula Park at Fern Ridge. This species "wears sunglasses"; the eye is completely surrounded by black.
- CLARK'S GREBE** (*Aechmophorus clarkii*) – Like the previous species, we had nice studies of these at Perkins Peninsula. Through the scopes we could see the extended white on the face and the brighter yellow bill.

Columbidae (Pigeons and Doves)

- ROCK PIGEON** (*Columba livia*) – Common in urban areas. [I]
- BAND-TAILED PIGEON** (*Patagioenas fasciata*) – A flocking species, the first glimpses of these big guys came from Ellmaker State Park but we saw them better later on at Ona Beach SP.
- EURASIAN COLLARED-DOVE** (*Streptopelia decaocto*) – Not native to the area, these introduced doves have been thriving in many parts of the country. We saw them numerous times around small towns including near Fern Ridge Reservoir. [I]
- MOURNING DOVE** (*Zenaida macroura*) – This familiar dove was fairly common around Eugene and a few other spots but not tallied every day.

Apodidae (Swifts)

- VAUX'S SWIFT** (*Chaetura vauxi*) – Surely one of the greatest spectacles we witnessed, a swarm of 1400+ migrant swifts swirled overhead and eventually spiraled into a chimney in Bend one evening. What a fantastic show!

Trochilidae (Hummingbirds)

- ANNA'S HUMMINGBIRD** (*Calypte anna*) – Although our first sighting was brief at Ona Beach, we caught up to a singing male at Stewart Park in Roseburg.
- BROAD-TAILED HUMMINGBIRD** (*Selasphorus platycercus*) – We saw a hummingbird high on Steens Mountain that looked to fit with this species. Although quite rare in Oregon, reports of this species have been sporadic from that area.

Rallidae (Rails, Gallinules, and Coots)

- SORA** (*Porzana carolina*) – We heard one of these rails chirping a couple of times from the wet area near Page Springs Campground at the base of Steens Mountain. [*]
- AMERICAN COOT** (*Fulica americana*) – Huge numbers of these formed a massive flock at the south end of Diamond Lake as we approached Crater Lake.

Gruidae (Cranes)

- SANDHILL CRANE** (*Antigone canadensis*) – We eventually caught up to some flying near Malheur NWR and then some standing in a field near Burns.

Haematopodidae (Oystercatchers)

- BLACK OYSTERCATCHER** (*Haematopus bachmani*) – A classic and distinctive shorebird of the West Coast. We tallied this sooty-colored species each of the days we were along the coast. Good spots included Boiler Bay, Devils Punchbowl, Yaquina Head, and Seal Rock.

Charadriidae (Plovers and Lapwings)

- BLACK-BELLIED PLOVER** (*Pluvialis squatarola*) – Although our first encounter was a heard bird at Fern Ridge, we later saw one foraging in a backbay of the Siuslaw River.
- PACIFIC GOLDEN-PLOVER** (*Pluvialis fulva*) – This was a fantastic species to see on tour. A fairly rare migrant, these winter mostly on islands in the South Pacific. However, we crossed paths with one at Fern Ridge.
- SNOWY PLOVER** (*Charadrius nivosus*) – We found ourselves inserted into some shorebird drama when researchers studying this vulnerable population came rushing up to us, needing help. They had a plover chick and needed some fingernail clippers. We were happy to help and eventually they were able to fix the problem. Oh and yes, we did have good scope views of at least one adult and a couple of chicks that had nested near China Creek.
- SEMPALMATED PLOVER** (*Charadrius semipalmatus*) – Good numbers of these migrants were seen foraging on the mudflats at Fern Ridge and Ona Beach.
- KILLDEER** (*Charadrius vociferus*) – A common and familiar plover in a variety of open habitats.

Scolopacidae (Sandpipers and Allies)

- WHIMBREL** (*Numenius phaeopus*) – Quite a number of these curlews were seen migrating overhead at the Siuslaw River.
- BLACK TURNSTONE** (*Arenaria melanocephala*) – This rock-loving West Coast specialty was one of our targets and we had luck right away at Boiler Bay. We saw more at Devils Punchbowl and then a whole flock at the South Jetty at the Coquille River.
- SURFBIRD** (*Calidris virgata*) – Like the previous species, this shorebird was one we were keen to find along the rocky shorelines. Our first came from Devils Punchbowl where we looked down on a couple, but our views at the Coquille River a couple days later were even better.
- SANDERLING** (*Calidris alba*) – Not very common for us along the sand beaches. Our only encounter came from China Creek near Bandon where we saw a flock of ten.
- LEAST SANDPIPER** (*Calidris minutilla*) – A tiny shorebird with yellow legs. These were tallied mostly at Fern Ridge and Ona Beach.
- PECTORAL SANDPIPER** (*Calidris melanotos*) – Our first birding outing at Fern Ridge netted us this fairly uncommon migrant shorebird.
- WESTERN SANDPIPER** (*Calidris mauri*) – Perhaps one of the most common shorebirds on the trip, these little peeps were seen in huge flocks at Bandon NWR including a gathering of 2000.
- SHORT-BILLED DOWITCHER** (*Limnodromus griseus*) – Out west, this species is often fond of saltwater habitats. We saw a nice gathering with the Surfbirds and turnstones at the Coquille River.
- LONG-BILLED DOWITCHER** (*Limnodromus scolopaceus*) – This dowitcher is often found in freshwater habitats and our first day at Fern Ridge tallied a good number of these.

- WILSON'S SNIBE** (*Gallinago delicata*) – We got to study four of these at Stewart Park in Roseburg. Quite cryptically patterned!
- RED-NECKED PHALAROPE** (*Phalaropus lobatus*) – It turned out to be a great trip for this small and unique shorebird. We tallied them at a variety of places like Fern Ridge Reservoir, Boiler Bay, Yaquina Head, and Hatfield Lake.
- WANDERING TATTLER** (*Tringa incana*) – This is another West Coast specialty that we targeted along the rocky shorelines. Our best luck came from Yaquina Head, the Siuslaw River jetty, and Coquille River South Jetty.
- GREATER YELLOWLEGS** (*Tringa melanoleuca*) – There were scattered sightings of this sturdy *Tringa* in various wetlands and marshes.
- LESSER YELLOWLEGS** (*Tringa flavipes*) – Our only encounter with this smaller *Tringa* was at Fern Ridge on our first day.

Alcidae (Auks, Murres, and Puffins)

- COMMON MURRE** (*Uria aalge*) – This black-and-white alcid was fairly common along the coast and we encountered them at Boiler Bay, Yaquina Head, Siuslaw River, and Coquille River.
- PIGEON GUILLEMOT** (*Cephus columba*) – This alcid is a West Coast specialty. We saw them at a couple of spots including Boiler Bay and the Siuslaw River.
- MARbled MURRELET** (*Brachyramphus marmoratus*) – The wayside area at Boiler Bay produced several of these tiny alcids offshore.
- CASSIN'S AUKLET** (*Ptychoramphus aleuticus*) – This is another alcid that we scoped offshore from Boiler Bay on our second day of tour.
- RHINOCEROS AUKLET** (*Cerorhinca monocerata*) – Although an auklet by name, this species is actually more closely related to puffins. We saw a few of these offshore at Boiler Bay and Yaquina Head.

Laridae (Gulls, Terns, and Skimmers)

- HEERMANN'S GULL** (*Larus heermanni*) – It was another poor year for this species along the West Coast. Not very many had been making their way northward into Oregon but we were lucky to spot a single bird flying by Boiler Bay.
- RING-BILLED GULL** (*Larus delawarensis*) – We had a few around Fern Ridge on our first day. Later, a couple were scoped at Chickahominy as well.
- WESTERN GULL** (*Larus occidentalis*) – This large, dark-backed and dark-winged gull provided us good looks and studies during our time along the coast.
- CALIFORNIA GULL** (*Larus californicus*) – This three-year gull wasn't uncommon throughout the trip, especially along the coast where we had good studies of them.
- GLAUCOUS-WINGED GULL** (*Larus glaucescens*) – We studied a couple of these near Boiler Bay where we could see the paler mantles, paler wingtips, streaky head/neck, and dark eyes.
- CASPIAN TERN** (*Hydroprogne caspia*) – These big terns really stood out with those bright orange bills! We saw them at Fern Ridge and then various spots along the coast.
- COMMON TERN** (*Sterna hirundo*) – We had a small flock of terns wing past us at Hatfield Lake that were probably this species.

Gaviidae (Loons)

- RED-THROATED LOON** (*Gavia stellata*) – This slender loon species was spotted offshore a couple of times including at Yaquina Head and Seal Rock. These were the smallest and palest of the loon species we saw.
- PACIFIC LOON** (*Gavia pacifica*) – Although not very common for us along the shore for some reason, we did encounter a few of these western loons at Boiler Bay and then again at Yaquina Head.
- COMMON LOON** (*Gavia immer*) – Despite the name, this isn't really the most common of the loons along the West Coast in fall! We only encountered one offshore at the Siuslaw River.

Procellariidae (Shearwaters and Petrels)

- SOOTY SHEARWATER** (*Ardenna grisea*) – Wheeling, arcing, and speeding by in lines way offshore, these tubenoses were spotted by a few folks from Boiler Bay.

Phalacrocoracidae (Cormorants and Shags)

- BRANDT'S CORMORANT** (*Phalacrocorax penicillatus*) – We had fun studying the cormorants on this trip including this strictly saltwater-loving West Coast specialty. A few of these were still attending nests at a few of the waysides.
- PELAGIC CORMORANT** (*Phalacrocorax pelagicus*) – Small and all-dark, this long-tailed cormorant was pretty easy to recognize at locations like Boiler Bay, Yaquina Head, Seal Rock, and Sea Lion Point.
- DOUBLE-CRESTED CORMORANT** (*Phalacrocorax auritus*) – This common species is the only cormorant we expected to see away from the coast.

Pelecanidae (Pelicans)

- AMERICAN WHITE PELICAN** (*Pelecanus erythrorhynchos*) – A few of these black-and-white giants were seen flying at the Malheur NWR headquarters. What a huge bird!
- BROWN PELICAN** (*Pelecanus occidentalis*) – Fairly common along the coast during our time around Newport and south to Bandon.

Ardeidae (Herons, Egrets, and Bitterns)

- AMERICAN BITTERN** (*Botaurus lentiginosus*) – This was an excellent pickup! A couple of these were spotted on the far shore of Myrtle Point Marsh en route to Roseburg.
- GREAT BLUE HERON** (*Ardea herodias*) – Common in wet habitats like marshes and wetlands.
- GREAT EGRET** (*Ardea alba*) – Like the previous species, these herons weren't difficult to find this year in marshes at Fern Ridge, Boiler Bay, Redmon Pond, and Myrtle Point Marsh.

Threskiornithidae (Ibises and Spoonbills)

- WHITE-FACED IBIS** (*Plegadis chihi*) – We eventually tracked these dark waders down at Chickahominy Reservoir and then again near Hines.

Cathartidae (New World Vultures)

- TURKEY VULTURE** (*Cathartes aura*) – Common, tallied every day of tour.

Pandionidae (Osprey)

OSPREY (*Pandion haliaetus*) – This fish-eating raptor was seen a couple of times including at the Siuslaw River, China Creek, Face Rock, and Diamond Lake.

Accipitridae (Hawks, Eagles, and Kites)

GOLDEN EAGLE (*Aquila chrysaetos*) – We eventually hit pay-dirt as we drove up Steens Mountain. We saw one flying and later one perched up on a distant ridge. Excellent!

NORTHERN HARRIER (*Circus hudsonius*) – Fairly common throughout the trip in grassy and wet habitats.

SHARP-SHINNED HAWK (*Accipiter striatus*) – This tiny Accipiter was seen at Marys Peak and again at Ona Beach. The small males are hardly bigger than Steller's Jays!

COOPER'S HAWK (*Accipiter cooperii*) – We tracked one at Ona Beach where it eventually perched in a treetop way off to the south. We all got a chance to look at it in the scope before it vanished.

BALD EAGLE (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*) – A young bird soared by us, nearly at eye-level, at the Sea Lion Point overlook.

RED-SHOULDERED HAWK (ELEGANS) (*Buteo lineatus elegans*) – We were trucking it down the highway near Myrtle Point when we spotted one of these on the power-line. We turned around, found it again, and took a look. Good thing as it was the only one we saw on the trip.

RED-TAILED HAWK (*Buteo jamaicensis*) – A common raptor for us, especially near Three Sisters where we saw 13 of them perched on an irrigation pipe!

Strigidae (Owls)

BURROWING OWL (*Athene cucularia*) – Spotted just in time! We found a couple of these at an active burrow north of Malheur NWR as we drove back north at the end of the day. Such a cute little owl!

Alcedinidae (Kingfishers)

BELTED KINGFISHER (*Megasceryle alcyon*) – Fairly common, these were tallied at various spots and nearly every day.

Picidae (Woodpeckers)

RED-BREASTED SAPSUCKER (*Sphyrapicus ruber*) – It was really exciting having one of these show up at the Diamond Lake Overlook rest area! We eventually found another couple at P Ranch at Malheur NWR which was quite notable.

ACORN WOODPECKER (*Melanerpes formicivorus*) – We were successful in finding this valley species on our first day at Fern Ridge. That's the best place to see them on this route; we didn't see any others.

BLACK-BACKED WOODPECKER (*Picoides arcticus*) – Success! Our final day yielded one of these rare woodpeckers high up in the Malheur National Forest at one of the campgrounds there.

DOWNY WOODPECKER (*Dryobates pubescens*) – Not very common on this tour, most of our success was at Fern Ridge on our first day.

HAIRY WOODPECKER (*Dryobates villosus*) – Although it wasn't the focus of our attention, one of these medium-sized woodpeckers was with the Pinyon Jay flock in Sisters.

WHITE-HEADED WOODPECKER (*Dryobates albolarvatus*) – One of our main targets around Sisters, a couple of these fantastic woodpeckers eventually made their way around the Sisters Ponderosa Lodge. Good spotting, Charm!

NORTHERN FLICKER (*Colaptes auratus*) – Fairly common in a variety of wooded habitats.

Falconidae (Falcons and Caracaras)

AMERICAN KESTREL (*Falco sparverius*) – We had better luck with these small falcons once we made our way out to eastern Oregon.

MERLIN (*Falco columbarius*) – It was rather quick but this falcon was seen at the Malheur NWR headquarters area.

PEREGRINE FALCON (*Falco peregrinus*) – Seeing this regal species perched so nicely at Yaquina Head was a real treat!

PRAIRIE FALCON (*Falco mexicanus*) – The darned thing kept flying farther and farther away but at least a few folks got their bins on this falcon on our way up Steens Mountain.

Tyrannidae (Tyrant Flycatchers)

OLIVE-SIDED FLYCATCHER (*Contopus cooperi*) – A rather uncommon flycatcher, a family group of these was seen at Bandon Marsh NWR near one of the overlooks.

WESTERN WOOD-PEWEE (*Contopus sordidulus*) – We got to see these right before they migrated south. We tallied them at Fern Ridge, Malheur NWR headquarters, and Page Springs Campground.

WILLOW FLYCATCHER (*Empidonax traillii*) – This little guy was one of the confusing flycatchers we saw near the deck at the Malheur NWR headquarters area.

HAMMOND'S FLYCATCHER (*Empidonax hammondi*) – We were able to get some photos of one of the Empids we saw at the Malheur NWR headquarters which confirmed it as this species.

PACIFIC-SLOPE FLYCATCHER (*Empidonax difficilis*) – This greenish flycatcher was seen at Malheur NWR headquarters as well.

BLACK PHOEBE (*Sayornis nigricans*) – A fairly uncommon bird on our route, this dark-backed flycatcher was seen at Fern Ridge and then again at Myrtle Point Marsh.

SAY'S PHOEBE (*Sayornis saya*) – Of all the phoebes, Say's love open country maybe the most of all. We encountered them at the Three Sisters Viewpoint and again at the P Ranch in Malheur NWR.

Laniidae (Shrikes)

LOGGERHEAD SHRIKE (*Lanius ludovicianus*) – These black-and-white "butcherbirds" were seen in the open sage country near Malheur NWR.

Vireonidae (Vireos, Shrike-Babblers, and Erpornis)

HUTTON'S VIREO (*Vireo huttoni*) – We found and photographed one of these plainly-colored vireos at the Page Springs Campground south of Malheur NWR. This is very noteworthy and it represents just the 2nd record of this species for all of eastern Oregon!

CASSIN'S VIREO (*Vireo cassinii*) – This nicely marked vireo species was seen just a couple of times near Malheur NWR. This is in the "Solitary Vireo" complex from back in the day.

WARBLING VIREO (*Vireo gilvus*) – A simple-looking vireo, this widespread species was tallied just once or twice including at the headquarters of Malheur NWR.

Corvidae (Crows, Jays, and Magpies)

CANADA JAY (*Perisoreus canadensis*) – It was a good trip for this species which has gone through a recent name change, from Gray Jay back to the original Canada Jay. We saw these at Marys Peak, the Diamond Lake overlook, and Crater Lake NP.

PINYON JAY (*Gymnorhinus cyanocephalus*) – This was a highlight for sure! After a fair bit of looking around the town of Sisters for the roaming flock, we finally connected with them near the Sisters High School. Not just one or two, but a huge flock that numbered nearly 100. Excellent!

STELLER'S JAY (*Cyanocitta stelleri*) – This handsome jay was common on the first half of our tour along the coast and up in the mountains.

CALIFORNIA SCRUB-JAY (*Aphelocoma californica*) – This species typically is only found up the valley towards Eugene, Fern Ridge, Roseburg, etc. We encountered them a number of times at various parks and sometimes even as we were driving. This is part of the former "Western Scrub-Jay" complex.

BLACK-BILLED MAGPIE (*Pica hudsonia*) – A beautiful Corvid! This long-tailed species was seen nicely around Sisters and again near Malheur.

CLARK'S NUTCRACKER (*Nucifraga columbiana*) – No visit to the rim of Crater Lake would be complete without sharing the view with this high-elevation Corvid!

AMERICAN CROW (*Corvus brachyrhynchos*) – Common throughout much of the trip.

COMMON RAVEN (*Corvus corax*) – Common in the mountains and the dry, sage flats.

Alaudidae (Larks)

HORNED LARK (*Eremophila alpestris*) – The bizarre pumice desert near Crater Lake was hosting a family of these open-country birds.

Hirundinidae (Swallows)

PURPLE MARTIN (*Progne subis*) – Seen overhead at Fern Ridge Reservoir and again in Newport. We caught these just in time; they would be migrating south any day.

VIOLET-GREEN SWALLOW (*Tachycineta thalassina*) – The best show for this western species was at Stewart Park in Roseburg.

BARN SWALLOW (*Hirundo rustica*) – Our most common swallow on tour, these were tallied nearly every day.

Paridae (Tits, Chickadees, and Titmice)

BLACK-CAPPED CHICKADEE (*Poecile atricapillus*) – This was the common chickadee while we were at Fern Ridge Reservoir. A few days later, we saw some more at Myrtle Point Marsh.

MOUNTAIN CHICKADEE (*Poecile gambeli*) – Between Bend, Sisters, and the Malheur NF, these higher elevation areas were home to this distinct chickadee. They were always interested in us and sometimes dropped down to mere feet from us.

CHESTNUT-BACKED CHICKADEE (*Poecile rufescens*) – This Oregon tour is a fantastic one to experience this specialty of the Pacific Northwest. We saw this attractive species many times, often along the coast at spots like Ona Beach, Seal Rock, and Bandon Marsh NWR.

Aegithalidae (Long-tailed Tits)

BUSHTIT (*Psaltriparus minimus*) – This tiny species was seen briefly at the end of the trail at the Hatfield Marine Science Center in Newport.

Sittidae (Nuthatches)

RED-BREASTED NUTHATCH (*Sitta canadensis*) – A handsome nuthatch, these were seen on a majority of our days.

WHITE-BREASTED NUTHATCH (INTERIOR WEST) (*Sitta carolinensis tenuissima*) – It's good to take note of the different subspecies of this nuthatch in case they get split in future years. This subspecies was seen around Sisters and out east in the Malheur National Forest.

WHITE-BREASTED NUTHATCH (PACIFIC) (*Sitta carolinensis aculeata*) – This coastal subspecies was seen around Eugene, specifically around Fern Ridge Reservoir. The two subspecies seen in Oregon are separated by the Cascades.

PYGMY NUTHATCH (*Sitta pygmaea*) – A tiny, flocking nuthatch that we saw well around Sisters.

Certhiidae (Treecreepers)

BROWN CREEPER (*Certhia americana*) – An unobtrusive species seen climbing up the trunks of trees. We only had a couple of encounters including at Perkins Peninsula at Fern Ridge and again at Cold Springs Campground.

Troglodytidae (Wrens)

ROCK WREN (*Salpinctes obsoletus*) – It doesn't matter if it's high elevation, as long as there are rocks! We found this rock-loving species high up on Steens Mountain.

CANYON WREN (*Catherpes mexicanus*) – Our final morning we stopped along some canyons and got one of these songsters to reply. However, it stayed out of view, presumably perched high on the canyon walls somewhere. [*]

PACIFIC WREN (*Troglodytes pacificus*) – We knew right where to go at one of the rest areas on our first day to pull one of these tiny, dark, forest-dwelling wrens out of the shadows. Success!

MARSH WREN (*Cistothorus palustris*) – One of these cattail-loving wrens was seen on our first morning at Fern Ridge chattering from atop some vegetation.

BEWICK'S WREN (*Thryomanes bewickii*) – The Perkins Peninsula Park at Fern Ridge was good for this species and we managed to find a couple there on our first morning.

Cinclidae (Dippers)

AMERICAN DIPPER (*Cinclus mexicanus*) – Our only songbird that swims, this classic western species was scoped in a river as we climbed up towards Crater Lake. A beautiful, unique, and excellent species to enjoy in Oregon.

Regulidae (Kinglets)

GOLDEN-CROWNED KINGLET (*Regulus satrapa*) – A fair number of these were seen (or heard) at various stops, mostly along the coast and in the mountains.

RUBY-CROWNED KINGLET (*Regulus calendula*) – A couple of these energetic birds were seen during the busy birding at Malheur NWR headquarters.

Paradoxornithidae (Parrotbills, Wrentit, and Allies)

WRENTIT (*Chamaea fasciata*) – Not only did we find this coastal specialty, we REALLY found it... it nearly landed on us! It was a real treat to enjoy this at such a close range.

Turdidae (Thrushes and Allies).

WESTERN BLUEBIRD (*Sialia mexicana*) – Our first encounter was at Stewart Park in Roseburg but we went on to find more the following day around Sisters.

MOUNTAIN BLUEBIRD (*Sialia currucoides*) – Not very common this time around, our best luck with this sky blue species was as we drove up Steens Mountain.

TOWNSEND'S SOLITAIRE (*Myadestes townsendi*) – A singing bird was tracked down near Tumalo Reservoir where it preferred to perch atop conifers.

VARIED THRUSH (*Ixoreus naevius*) – Excellent! Our first full day scored us this sometimes-tricky northwestern specialty. We all got good looks as it hopped around on the road as we came down from Marys Peak.

HERMIT THRUSH (*Catharus guttatus*) – Our only encounter was a brief one at the Trout Creek Hillside near Sisters.

AMERICAN ROBIN (*Turdus migratorius*) – This familiar thrush was tallied every day.

Mimidae (Mockingbirds and Thrashers).

SAGE THRASHER (*Oreoscoptes montanus*) – This sage specialist was seen very nicely in the dry country near Hines as we arrived in the area. The short tail and short bill of this species makes it a bit of an outlier among thrashers.

Sturnidae (Starlings).

EUROPEAN STARLING (*Sturnus vulgaris*) – Common and widespread in urban areas. [H]

Motacillidae (Wagtails and Pipits).

AMERICAN PIPIT (*Anthus rubescens*) – Our first encounter was with a flock that was flying around and foraging up at the top of Marys Peak including a couple that landed on the picnic table.

Bombycillidae (Waxwings).

CEDAR WAXWING (*Bombycilla cedrorum*) – Not uncommon along our route, these crested frugivores were seen at various spots like Fern Ridge and the Hatfield Marine Science Center.

Ptilionotidae (Silky-flycatchers).

PHAINOPEPLA (*Phainopepla nitens*) – This was a shocker! This is a very rare bird in Oregon and the state has fewer than 20 records all-time. We were lucky and our visit to Page Springs Campground overlapped with a previously-located individual. We eventually found it and enjoyed good looks.

Fringillidae (Finches, Euphonias, and Allies).

EVENING GROSBEAK (*Coccothraustes vespertinus*) – Perhaps our best looks at these yellow and white finches were at the Cold Springs Campground where they were perched high up in a conifer.

HOUSE FINCH (*Haemorhous mexicanus*) – Scattered sightings throughout the trip on about half the days.

CASSIN'S FINCH (*Haemorhous cassinii*) – This western finch was seen nicely through the scope at the Sisters High School while we were enjoying the Pinyon Jay flock. We later saw another at the Malheur NF out east.

RED CROSSBILL (*Loxia curvirostra*) – We encountered this unique finch several times around Sisters. The High School grounds had some and the Sisters Ponderosa Lodge did as well.

PINE SISKIN (*Spinus pinus*) – A swarm of these streaked finches came in to the feeders at the Sisters Ponderosa Lodge.

LESSER GOLDFINCH (*Spinus psaltria*) – Our first encounter with these small, dark-backed finches came from Stewart Park in Roseburg.

AMERICAN GOLDFINCH (*Spinus tristis*) – We saw these right off the bat at Fern Ridge on our first day.

Passerellidae (New World Sparrows).

CHIPPING SPARROW (*Spizella passerina*) – Not very common in these parts, the first sighting came from the walkway at Fern Ridge where we stumbled on a young bird.

FOX SPARROW (*Passerella iliaca*) – This big and chunky sparrow was seen just a couple of times including along the Trout Creek hillside near Sisters.

DARK-EYED JUNCO (*Junco hyemalis*) – We encountered the "Oregon" subspecies of this familiar species on and off throughout the trip.

WHITE-CROWNED SPARROW (*Zonotrichia leucophrys*) – A fairly common species throughout the trip, they were seen at spots like the Brothers Rest Area, Potter Swamp Road, Page Springs Campground, and all around Malheur NWR.

SAGEBRUSH SPARROW (*Artemisiospiza nevadensis*) – What a cool bird to get to see in Oregon! This sage specialist performed pretty well for us once we actually found one! This was at a side-road en route to Malheur NWR.

VESPER SPARROW (*Poocetes gramineus*) – Our drive up Steens Mountain netted us this sparrow of open country.

SAVANNAH SPARROW (*Passerculus sandwichensis*) – Swarms of these compact little sparrows were alongside Potter Swamp Road near Hines.

SONG SPARROW (*Melospiza melodia*) – You might not have recognized these large and dark sparrows here!

LINCOLN'S SPARROW (*Melospiza lincolni*) – Our only sighting actually came on our first day near Fern Ridge Reservoir.

SPOTTED TOWHEE (*Pipilo maculatus*) – The western counterpart to the Eastern Towhee from out east, these were seen on our first day, at Perkins Peninsula Park, and then various spots after that.

Icteriidae (Yellow-breasted Chat).

YELLOW-BREASTED CHAT (*Icteria virens*) – This was a great, unexpected addition! We encountered one of these at Page Springs Campground while we waited for the Phainopepla to appear.

Icteridae (Troupials and Allies).

YELLOW-HEADED BLACKBIRD (*Xanthocephalus xanthocephalus*) – This beautiful western blackbird was seen nicely around Hines and then again around Malheur NWR. The morning light on them perched up near the headquarters was fantastic!

WESTERN MEADOWLARK (*Sturnella neglecta*) – We finally found these on our final day in a field near Hines.

RED-WINGED BLACKBIRD (*Agelaius phoeniceus*) – A familiar species we saw near Fern Ridge and again near Hines.

BREWER'S BLACKBIRD (*Euphagus cyanocephalus*) – An abundant species, these were seen along roadsides, in parking lots, on curbs eating crumbs, you name it!

Parulidae (New World Warblers)

ORANGE-CROWNED WARBLER (*Oreothlypis celata*) – It wasn't until the Brothers Rest Stop that we saw our first one of these somewhat plainly-colored warblers.

COMMON YELLOWTHROAT (*Geothlypis trichas*) – A denizen of marshes and wet, weedy areas. We saw these masked warblers at Fern Ridge, Bandon Marsh NWR, and Stewart Park.

YELLOW WARBLER (*Setophaga petechia*) – Not super common during our trip, only a few were seen at spots like Perkins Peninsula, Malheur NWR headquarters, and Page Springs Campground.

YELLOW-RUMPED WARBLER (AUDUBON'S) (*Setophaga coronata auduboni*) – Fairly common once we reached the Cascades and areas farther east.

BLACK-THROATED GRAY WARBLER (*Setophaga nigrescens*) – I'm glad we connected with this western warbler! We netted this species on our first day at Perkins Peninsula.

TOWNSEND'S WARBLER (*Setophaga townsendi*) – This is another western specialty that we found a couple of times; first at the Trout Creek Hillside and then again at Malheur NWR headquarters.

WILSON'S WARBLER (*Cardellina pusilla*) – A couple of these black-capped warblers flitted around at the Malheur NWR headquarters.

Cardinalidae (Cardinals and Allies)

WESTERN Tanager (*Piranga ludoviciana*) – Finally! A fairly drab individual showed up for us at Malheur NWR headquarters right before we departed.

Passeridae (Old World Sparrows)

HOUSE SPARROW (*Passer domesticus*) – Seen a few times in urban areas. [I]

MAMMALS

NUTTALL'S (MOUNTAIN) COTTONTAIL (*Sylvilagus nuttalli*) – The only cottontails we saw in the eastern half of the state were this species.

BLACK-TAILED JACKRABBIT (*Lepus californicus*) – The large size and huge ears made this critter an easy one to identify!

LEAST CHIPMUNK (*Tamias minimus*) – These tiny guys like to run with their tails sticking straight up in the air.

TOWNSEND'S CHIPMUNK (*Tamias townsendii*) – This range-restricted species was seen up around Marys Peak on our first day.

CALIFORNIA GROUND SQUIRREL (*Spermophilus beecheyi*) – Seen on our first day around Fern Ridge.

GOLDEN-MANTLED GROUND SQUIRREL (*Spermophilus lateralis*) – What an attractive ground squirrel! These were common (and friendly) at several spots.

WESTERN GRAY SQUIRREL (*Sciurus griseus*) – A few folks saw this gray tree squirrel along a roadside near Tumalo Reservoir.

CHICKAREE (*Tamiasciurus douglasii*) – A close relative of the Red Squirrel that many folks are familiar with.

NUTRIA (*Myocastor coypus*) – A couple of these introduced critters were seen at Myrtle Point Marsh. [I]

GRAY WHALE (*Eschrichtius robustus*) – How cool was this! These giants were seen from shore during our full day around Newport.

COYOTE (*Canis latrans*) – Usually a fairly common species around Malheur NWR.

AMERICAN BADGER (*Taxidea taxus*) – As luck would have it, we crossed paths with one of these predators as we were driving back down from Steens Mountain. Very lucky indeed!

NORTH AMERICAN RIVER OTTER (*Lontra canadensis*) – Wow, I don't think any of us were expecting this! A group of otters were playing around some logs in a pond at Malheur NWR headquarters!

STELLER'S SEA LION (*Eumetopias jubatus*) – A few of these large guys were seen offshore as we looked down on them from various roadside overlooks.

HARBOR SEAL (*Phoca vitulina*) – Fairly common during our days along the coast. It wasn't uncommon to see their heads up, periscoping.

MULE DEER (*Odocoileus hemionus*) – Seen once we reached the dry country out east.

WHITE-TAILED DEER (*Odocoileus virginianus*) – Seen various days throughout the tour.

PRONGHORN (*Antilocapra americana*) – It's always a highlight to see these fast, native animals in their element. They preferred the greener pastures in the dry, sage deserts near Malheur NWR.

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

Totals for the tour: 187 bird taxa and 18 mammal taxa