

Utah: Birding Canyon Country Species List | May 18-26, 2025 with Naturalist Journeys



Compiled by guide David Jaffe with guide Steve Grace. Our clients included David, Janet, Donna, Don, Linda, Mike, Bill, Arlene, Chris and Gillian

This tour is more than merely a birding tour in Canyon Country. It would be impossible to bird for over a week amongst some of the most stunning landscapes in the US, if not the world, and not be overwhelmed with its beauty. The geology alone of the places we visited—Zion, the North Rim of the Grand Canyon, Bryce and Capitol Reef—is beyond compare. To this add just over 100 species of birds, 10 mammals and several lizards and butterflies accompanied by many species of flowers, and we have the makings for a truly memorable experience. And memorable it was!! The 10 guests and 2 guides on this tour repeatedly commented how fortunate we all felt to be exploring this incredible part of the Colorado Plateau.

Our exploration of these wild landscapes was complimented by incredibly tasty food, wonderful accommodations and comfortable weather which was not too cold and not too hot. Spring is the perfect time for a trip to the National Parks of Southern Utah and the North Rim of the Grand Canyon. We spent at least one full day in most of these destinations and observed sunrise over the beautiful desert landscapes at all of them with a few destinations offering opportunities for two sunrises (for the early intrepid adventures) and two sunsets. A sunrise on the North Rim of the Grand Canyon or from Sunrise Point in Bryce Canyon is worthy of any 'bucket list'!

If you're new to eBird, be sure to click "Show All Details" on the right side of the list to expand the report and reveal where and when each of the birds were seen and how many.

[Utah: Birding Canyon Country | May 18-26, 2025 | eBird Trip Report](#)

The following list highlights the 101 species of birds we observed, 12 species of mammals, 3 reptiles and amphibians, 4 butterflies and one Salmon Fly during the trip.

BIRDS (101 species were recorded of which 1 was heard only and 1 was an 'exotic escapee'):

DUCKS, GEESE AND SWANS: Anatidae (6)

Canada Goose *Branta canadensis*—Recorded on 2 days of the tour at Tonaquint Nature Center, Ruby's Inn Pond

American Wigeon *Mareca americana*—Ruby's Inn Pond

Mallard *Anas platyrhynchos*—Recorded on 6 days of the tour on the Virgin River in Zion NP, several of the ponds and lakes visited and finally from Fruita Campground in Capitol Reef NP

Ring-necked Duck *Aythya collaris*—Seen Boulder Mountain Lodge and Pond

Ruddy Duck *Oxyura jamaicensis*—Recorded on 3 days of the tour at appropriate wetlands: Jackson Flat, Ruby's Inn pond, and Boulder Mountain Lodge Pond

Mute Swan *Cygnus olor*—Observed at Tonaquint Nature Center

PARTRIDGES, PHEASANTS, AND ALLIES: Phasianidae (1)

Wild Turkey *Meleagris gallopavo*—Seen on all 3 days in Zion National Park

GREBES: Podicipedidae (2)

Pied-billed Grebe *Podilymbus podiceps*—Recorded at Jackson Flat and Boulder Mountain Lodge and Pond

Eared Grebe *Podiceps nigricollis*—Recorded at Jackson Flat and Ruby's Inn pond

PIGEONS AND DOVES: Columbidae (3)

Eurasian Collared-Dove *Streptopelia decaocto*—Reported on 3 days of the tour: Tonaquint Nature Center, Kanab and Ruby's Inn pond

White-winged Dove *Zenaida asiatica*- Observed at Tonaquint Nature Center

Mourning Dove *Zenaida macroura*—Seen on 3 days of the tour: Tonaquint Nature Center, Grafton and the Fruita Campground in Capitol Reef NP

CUCKOOS AND ALLIES: Cuculidae (1)

Greater Roadrunner *Geococcyx californianus*—Our last observed bird at Tonaquint Nature Center

SWIFTS: Apodidae (1)

White-throated Swift *Aeronautes saxatalis*—Observed at every National Park we visited (Zion, Grand Canyon, Bryce and Capitol Reef)

HUMMINGBIRDS: Trochilidae (2)

Black-chinned Hummingbird *Archilochus alexandri*—Recorded in 3 locations: Tonaquint Nature Center, Grafton and Jacob Lake Inn

Anna's Hummingbird *Calypte anna*— Recorded at Tonaquint Nature Center; a low elevation species not found elsewhere on the tour

Broad-tailed Hummingbird *Selasphorus platycercus*—Observed at Tonaquint Nature Center and Jacob Lake Inn

RAILS, COOTS AND ALLIES: Rallidae (1)

American Coot *Fulica americana*—Many individuals seen at Jackson Flat, Ruby's Inn pond and the Boulder Mountain Lodge Pond

PLOVERS AND LAPWINGS: Charadriidae (1)

Killdeer *Charadrius vociferus*—a few seen on the shoreline at Jackson Flat

SANDPIPERS AND ALLIES: Scolopacidae (2)

Wilson's Phalarope *Phalaropus tricolor*—Ruby's Inn Pond

Spotted Sandpiper *Actitis macularius*—Two observed at Jackson Flat

GULLS AND TERNS: Laridae (2)

Ring-billed Gull *Larus delawarensis*—A lone individual observed at Jackson Flat

Forster's Tern *Sterna forsteri*—Distant views of two at Jackson Flat

HERONS AND EGRETS: Ardeidae (1)

Great Blue Heron *Ardea herodias*—Only one observed flying overhead in Grafton

NEW WORLD VULTURES: Cathartidae (2)

California Condor *Gymnogyps californianus*—A top highlight of this tour, probably for everyone, was the sighting of 2 different condors. After about an hour and half of waiting, searching, eating lunch, waiting some more, we all headed for a bathroom break when they arrived. We were literally just about to leave Navajo Bridge! Here are the details on each bird from condorspotter.com:

- 28: Male; Hatched: May 14, 2023; Age: 2 yrs 0 mos; Hatch Location: World Center for Birds of Prey; seen at Navajo Bridge, AZ
- 96: Female; Hatched: April 19, 2023; Age: 2 yrs 1 mos; Hatch Location: World Center for Birds of Prey; seen Navajo Bridge, AZ

Turkey Vulture *Cathartes aura*—This bird was observed almost every day at most locations visited and while driving

OSPREY: Pandionidae (1)

Osprey *Pandion haliaetus*—One flew by over the Colorado River and the area around Navajo Bridge; A second was observed at the Ruby's Inn Pond

HAWKS, KITES, AND EAGLES: Accipitridae (3)

Common Black Hawk *Buteogallus anthracinus*—One recorded over the historic site of Grafton

Swainson's Hawk *Buteo swainsoni*—Ruby's Inn Pond

Red-tailed Hawk *Buteo jamaicensis*—Unusual, we only encountered one during this trip, at Grafton

WOODPECKERS: Picidae (3)

Lewis's Woodpecker *Melanerpes lewis*—One of the highlights of the tour for many, we found 4 individuals at a dead Ponderosa Pine on the road up Boulder Mountain and had lengthy views of them all, watching them forage and cache acorns

Ladder-backed Woodpecker *Dryobates scalaris* Recorded once at Tonaquint Nature Center

Northern Flicker *Colaptes auratus*—Heard more than seen on many days of the tour; They were seen on the Riverside Walk in Zion NP and at Rainbow Point in Bryce Canyon NP. These birds were of the western, Red-shafted form

FALCONS AND CARACARAS: Falconidae (1)

Peregrine Falcon *Falco peregrinus*—One observed soaring amongst the cliff walls above the Riverside Walk in Zion NP

TYRANT FLYCATCHERS: Tyrannidae (8)

Olive-sided Flycatcher *Contopus cooperi*—Recorded twice: Boulder Mountain Inn and Lodge and the Fruita Campground in Capitol Reef NP

Western Wood Pewee *Contopus sordidulus*—Recorded once in the Fruita Campground in Capitol Reef NP

Black Phoebe *Sayornis nigricans*—The most numerous flycatcher for us being recorded at five locations: Tonaquint Nature Center, 3 locations in Zion NP, Jackson Flat and the Fruita Campground in Capitol Reef NP

Say's Phoebe *Sayornis saya*—Recorded at Grafton, the Fruita Campground in Capitol Reef NP, and the Nature Center in Capitol Reef NP after finishing some delectable pies!

Vermilion Flycatcher *Pyrocephalus rubinus*—Some good looks at Grafton

Ash-throated Flycatcher *Myiarchus cinerascens* Recorded at Zion NP and the Fruita Campground in Capitol Reef NP

Cassin's Kingbird *Tyrannus vociferans*—Seen on the Riverside Walk in Zion NP

Western Kingbird *Tyrannus verticalis*—Recorded 3 times: Grafton, the Fruita Campground in Capitol Reef NP, and the Nature Center in Capitol Reef NP

CROWS AND JAYS: Corvidae (7)

Steller's Jay *Cyanocitta stelleri*—We saw this in 2 locations at Grand Canyon: on the North Rim and from the parking lot and at Widforss Point Trail

Woodhouse's Scrub-Jay *Aphelocoma woodhouseii*—Recorded in 3 locations with two of them being in Zion NP (Lodge and Checkerboard Mesa); We also saw one at Cape Royal, Grand Canyon NP

Black-billed Magpie *Pica hudsonia*—This corvid has an interesting geographic distribution in Utah, being found mostly toward the northern part of the state; we only saw this bird once while driving from Capitol Reef NP back to St. George

Clark's Nutcracker *Nucifraga columbiana*—This dramatic looking corvid was heard many times and seen on the Bristlecone Loop Trail and Mossy Cave Trail in Bryce Canyon NP. We also saw one on our drive through Boulder, when we stopped to look for the Lewis's Woodpecker

Common Raven *Corvus corax*—Seen every day of the tour; a ubiquitous presence in Canyon Country

Chickadees and allies: Paridae (1)

Bushtit *Psaltiriparus minimus*—Recorded at Zion Lodge and along the Riverside Walk in Zion NP. Steve, Bill and Linda observed an active Bushtit nest on lower section of the Angel's Landing trail.

SWALLOWS AND MARTINS: Hirundinidae (6)

Bank Swallow *Riparia riparia*—Only seen at Ruby's Inn Pond

Tree Swallow *Tachyneta bicolor*—Only seen at Ruby's Inn Pond

Violet-green Swallow *Tachycineta thalassina*—Seen many times throughout the trip: Tonaquint Nature Center, Grafton, several locations in Zion, Navajo Bridge, Ruby's Inn Pond, the Bristlecone Loop Trail in Bryce Canyon NP, Boulder Mountain Lodge and Pond and the Fruita Campground area in Capitol Reef NP

Northern Rough-winged Swallow *Stelgidopteryx serripennis*—Only seen at Boulder Mountain Lodge and Pond

Barn Swallow *Hirundo rustica*—Recorded at Grafton and Ruby's Inn Pond

Cliff Swallow *Petrochelidon pyrrhonota*—Tonaquint Nature Center, Grafton and Ruby's Inn Pond

KINGLETS: Regulidae (1)

Ruby-crowned Kinglet *Regulus calendula*—Recorded once at Tonaquint Nature Center

NUTHATCHES: Sittidae (2)

White-breasted Nuthatch *Sitta carolinensis*—Recorded at Jacob Lake Inn on the trees by the water feature

Pygmy Nuthatch *Sitta pygmaea*—A difficult bird to spot on the tour, these little "forest elves" were seen at Cape Royal in Grand Canyon NP and on the Bristlecone Loop Trail in Bryce Canyon NP

Red-breast Nuthatch *Sitta canadensis*—Heard Only at Cape Royal, Grand Canyon, but heard well. Most heard it well and recognized the distinctive vocalization with some prompting by Steve.

WRENS: Troglodytidae (4)

Rock Wren *Salpinctes obsoletus*—We found one in the parking lot at Navajo Bridge, AZ

Northern House Wren *Troglodytes aedon*—Observed near Zion Lodge in the Park

Bewick's Wren *Thryomanes bewickii*—Recorded 3 times on the tour: Tonaquint Nature Center, Grafton and Coral Pink Sand Dunes St. Park

DIPPERS: Cinclidae (1)

American Dipper *Cinclus mexicanus*—Two adults observed foraging underwater and feeding juvenile birds that were displaying begging behavior. We watched this natural spectacle for about 20 minutes in the Virgin River in Zion NP.

STARLINGS AND MYNAS: Sturnidae (1)

European Starling *Sturnus vulgaris*—Recorded on 2 days of the tour in Grafton and the Kanab area

MOCKINGBIRDS AND THRASHERS: Mimidae (2)

Gray Catbird *Dumetella carolinensis*—This surprised us all as we were birding from the bridge over the Fruita River in Capitol Reef NP

Northern Mockingbird *Mimus polyglottos*—Seen once in Grafton

THRUSHES: Turdidae (4)

Western Bluebird *Sialia mexicana*—This lovely species delighted us on 5 days of the tour at Grafton, Checkerboard Mesa in Zion NP, Jacob Lake Inn, and twice in Bryce Canyon NP on the Bristlecone Loop Trail and Mossy Cave Trail

Mountain Bluebird *Sialia currucoides*—We had two fortunate viewings of this beauty, both in Bryce Canyon NP (Rainbow Pt. and Bristlecone Loop Trail)

Hermit Thrush *Catharus guttatus*—Seen at Mossy Cave, Bryce Canyon NP

American Robin *Turdus migratorius*—Reported on most days of the tour at many locations

WAXWINGS: Bombycillidae

Cedar Waxwing *Bombycilla cedrorum*—Recorded twice on the trip: Grafton and in the Fruita Campground area in Capitol Reef NP

SILKY-FLYCATCHERS: Ptiliogonatidae (1)

Phainopepla *Phainopepla nitens*—A male was seen on a few occasions at Grafton

OLD WORLD SPARROWS: Passeridae (1)

House Sparrow *Passer domesticus*—Found at the Grafton, Navajo Bridge and the Kanab region

FINCHES: Fringillidae (5)

House Finch *Haemorrhous mexicanus*—Recorded at two locations during the tour: Grafton and the Fruita Campground area in Capitol Reef NP

Cassin's Finch *Haemorrhous cassinii*—Recorded twice, once at Jacob Lake Inn and on the Bristlecone Loop Trail in Bryce Canyon NP

Red Crossbill *Loxia curvirostra*—We had a *very brief* look at one before flying away from us while hiking the Bristlecone Loop Trail in Bryce Canyon NP; presumably of the type 2 or Ponderosa call type

American Goldfinch *Spinus tristis*—One recorded at Jacob Flat

NEW WORLD SPARROWS: Passerellidae (8)

Chipping Sparrow *Spizella passerina*—Recorded on 3 days of the tour at Widforss Point Trail in Grand Canyon NP, Bristlecone Loop Trail in Bryce Canyon NP and the Nature Center in Capitol Reef NP

Brewer's Sparrow *Spizella breweri*—Steve's van observed one from the van moving about in the shrubs as we were leaving Grafton

Dark-eyed Junco *Junco hyemalis*—A few seen at Jacob Lake Inn, all individuals were of the Gray-headed form, which is the breeding race in the southwestern mountains

White-crowned Sparrow *Zonotrichia leucophrys*—Seen at Grafton and the Fruita Campground in Capitol Reef National Park

Song Sparrow *Melospiza melodia*—Observed at Tonaquint Nature Center, Zion Lodge, Riverside Walk in Zion NP and Coral Pink Sand Dunes St. Park

Abert's Towhee *Melospiza aberti*—As hoped for, found at Tonaquint Park, the only site with appropriate habitat for this species on the tour

Green-tailed Towhee *Pipilo chlorurus*—Seen at Tonaquint Nature Center and Rainbow Point in Bryce Canyon NP
Spotted Towhee *Pipilo maculatus*—Observed on 4 occasions at the Zion Lodge, Cape Royal in Grand Canyon NP, Mossy Cave in Bryce Canyon NP and near Boulder when we stopped for the Lewis's Woodpecker

YELLOW-BREASTED CHAT: Icteriidae (1)

Yellow-breasted Chat *Icteria virens*—Heard, but not seen. This elusive bird was heard in the Fruita Campground in Capitol Reef NP

NEW WORLD BLACKBIRDS: Icteridae (6)

Yellow-headed Blackbird *Xanthocephalus xanthocephalus*—We were fortunate to encounter this striking bird at the Ruby's Inn Pond and again at the Boulder Mountain Lodge and Pond

Bullock's Oriole *Icterus bullockii*—Recorded 4 times at Tonaquint Nature Center, Grafton, Zion Lodge in the Park and Fruita Campground in Capitol Reef NP

Red-winged Blackbird *Agelaius phoeniceus*—Observed at the Boulder Mountain Lodge and Pond

Brown-headed Cowbird *Molothrus ater*—Recorded at Grafton, Coral Pink Sand Dunes St. Park and the Fruita Campground in Capitol Reef NP

Brewer's Blackbird *Euphagus cyanocephalus*—Seen at Ruby's Inn Pond

Great-tailed Grackle *Quiscalus mexicanus*—Seen at Tonaquint Nature Center and Jackson Flat

NEW WORLD WARBLERS: Parulidae (6)

MacGillivray's Warbler *Geothlypis tolmiei*—We all got really good looks at this by the petroglyphs in Capitol Reef NP

Yellow Warbler *Setophaga petechia*—We saw this bird often, almost every day and at numerous locations.

Yellow-rumped Warbler *Setophaga coronata*—Another numerous warbler of the tour, these were found on 5 days at Grafton, Jackson Lake Inn, Widforss Pt. Trail in Grand Canyon NP, Bristlecone Loop Trail in Bryce Canyon NP and at Boulder Mountain Lodge and Pond; all those identified were of the western Audubon's variety

Grace's Warbler *Setophaga graciae*—Seen on the Bristlecone Loop Trail in Bryce Canyon NP

Black-throated Gray Warbler *Setophaga nigrescens*—Seen on the hike out to Cape Royal, Grand Canyon NP

Wilson's Warbler *Cardellina pusilla*—Recorded at Mossy Cave in Bryce Canyon NP

CARDINALS, GROSBEAKS, AND ALLIES: Cardinalidae (4)

Summer Tanager *Piranga rubra*—Seen at Grafton

Western Tanager *Piranga ludoviciana*—Observed at Grafton, Canyon Overlook Trail Area in Zion NP and along the Bristlecone Loop Trail in Bryce Canyon NP

Black-headed Grosbeak *Pheucticus melanocephalus*—Observed on numerous occasions, many times with the male serenading us with its beautiful song

Blue Grosbeak *Passerina caerulea*—Our only scant viewing was at the Tonaquint Nature Center and not everyone saw it.

Lazuli Bunting *Passerina amoena*—Two sightings: One in Grafton and a female or immature was seen by some at the Nature Center in Capitol Reef NP

MAMMALS (12)

Elk *Cervus canadensis*—Observed on the drive in to the Grand Canyon on the Kaibab National Forest

Mule Deer *Odocoileus hemionus*—Recorded on almost every day of the tour at most parks and on the sides of roads while driving.

Desert Cottontail *Sylvilagus audubonii*—One seen at Tonaquint Nature Reserve and one at Capitol Reef Resort NP

Utah Prairie Dog *Cynomys parvidens*—Observed everyday while in Bryce Canyon NP

White-tailed Antelope Squirrel *Ammospermophilus leucurus*— Seen at Tonaquint Nature Reserve and on the Bristlecone Loop Trail at Bryce Canyon NP

Golden-mantled Ground Squirrel *Callospermophilus lateralis*—Seen on the Bristlecone Loop Trail at Bryce Canyon NP sneaking around the Manzanita bushes

Rock Squirrel *Otospermophilus variegatus*—A widespread and frequently seen mammal; recorded on 5 days at many sites

Kaibab Squirrel *Sciurus aberti kaibabensis*—First spotted by Mike and then seen by all at the gas station on the way out of Grand Canyon NP

Least Chipmunk *Neotamias minimus*—Observed at Checkerboard Mesa

Uinta Chipmunk *Neotamias umbrinus*—Seen on the Mossy Cave Trail in Bryce Canyon NP

Muskrat *Ondatra zibethicus*—Observed a few times at the Boulder Mountain Lodge and Pond

Bat—One unidentified species observed first flying and then on the tree near the Gifford Homestead Gift Store, aka The Pie Shop!

REPTILES AND AMPHIBIANS (3)

Desert Spiny Lizard *Sceloporus magister*— Observed in Zion NP on logs after the Kayenta Trail on our walk back along the river

Western Whiptail *Aspidoscelis tigris*—Observed at Cape Royal in Grand Canyon NP

Red-eared Slider *Trachemys scripta*—Abundant in the pond at Tonaquint Park, where they have been introduced

INSECTS (5)

Tiger Swallowtail *Papilio glaucus*—Observed at Zion

Monarch *Danaus plexippus*—Observed at Zion

Sulfur sp. *Family Pieridae*—Unidentified member of the family

Mourning Cloak *Nymphalis antiopa*—Observed at Zion and at Widforss Pt. Trail in Grand Canyon NP

Salmonfly *Pteronarcys californica*—Steve caught and shared with the group before releasing it near the Virgin River in Zion NP

A SELECTION OF PLANTS:

Fremont Cottonwood *Populus fremontii*

Utah Juniper *Juniperus osteosperma*

Singleleaf Pinyon *Pinus monophylla*

Alcove Columbine *Aquilegia microcantha*

Scarlet Monkeyflower *Erythranthe cardinalis*

Shooting Star *Primula sp.*

Evening Primrose *Oenothera sp.*

Rock Clematis *Clematis columbiana*

Lewis Flax *Linum lewisii*

Scarlet Gilia *Ipomopsis aggregata*

LOCATIONS AND NOTES:

Day 1: Sunday, May 18, 2025—St. George; Tonaquint Park; Grafton; Zion National Park

Day 2: Tuesday, May 19, 2025—Zion National Park: Lodge, Grotto Trail to Kayenta Trail, Riverside Walk, Big Bend

Day 3: Wednesday, May 20, 2025—Zion National Park: East Entrance Road, Overlook Stop, Checkerboard Mesa; Kanab; Navajo Bridge; Jacob Lake Inn

Day 4: Thursday, May 21, 2025—Grand Canyon National Park: North Rim for Sunrise, Lodge area, Cape Royal, Roosevelt Point, Widforss Trail area

Day 5: Friday, May 22, 2025—Kanab: Jackson Flat Reservoir; Coral Pink Sand Dunes State Park; Ruby's Inn Pond; Bryce Canyon National Park: Sunset Point for sunset

Day 6: Saturday, May 23, 2025—Bryce Canyon National Park: Sunrise Point for sunrise, Rainbow Point, Bristlecone Loop Trail, Natural Bridge, Farview/Piracy Points, Sunset Point for sunset

Day 7: Sunday, May 24, 2025—Bryce Canyon National Park: Mossy Cave Trail; Lewis’s Woodpecker tree; Homestead Overlook (Boulder Mountain); Capitol Reef Resort

Day 8: Monday, May 25, 2025—Capitol Reef Resort; Capitol Reef National Park: Visitor center, Fremont River Trail, Fruita Campground, Grand Wash, Petroglyph Panel, Goosenecks Overlook

Day 9: Tuesday, May 26, 2025—Drive from Torrey to St. George