

# Oregon's Woodpecker Wonderland Species List | May 16-25, 2025 with Naturalist Journeys



**Compiled by guides Steve Shunk & Dave Mehlman  
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## Tour Summary

It was really just a bathroom stop; a remote bathroom stop in the middle of the sagebrush desert. We knew we'd see some sparrows and blackbirds there; no big deal. We did our thing and watched the sparrows, blackbirds, and desert rodents feeding on the birdseed left by visiting birders. Then, in an instant, a golden streak ripped through the air in front of us, just a few meters away and centimeters above the ground. The rodents dove into their burrows and the birds flushed in every direction as we watched a big female Prairie Falcon speed away empty-taloned at the end of her attack run. She blitzed through three more times; each time we thought she had given up, until she returned. And this was the start of our annual return to Oregon, just an hour from the Redmond airport.

We ended up seeing seven Prairie Falcons over 10 days, with a few Ferruginous Hawks and several Swainson's for good measure. We found 10 of Central Oregon's 11 breeding woodpecker species, including over a dozen active nests and 17 Lewis's Woodpeckers on one stretch of road in the Metolius Basin. Besides the raptors and woodpeckers, both stages of the tour—Malheur and the Cascades—were loaded with highlights.

Malheur produced 17 waterfowl species, including an unexpected Ross's Goose and several Blue-winged Teal. We saw Sandhill Cranes every day in the region, and we found over 500 Franklin's Gulls and more than 700 White-faced Ibis—both were conservative counts. Specialty songbirds at Malheur included Willow Flycatcher, Eastern Kingbird, Bobolink, and Yellow-breasted Chat. We also saw plenty of pronghorn in sagebrush country, along with a several Yellow-bellied Marmots.

The Cascades came through in fine form, with its own set of montane specialty breeders. We found all 10 of the expected warbler species, plus a hybrid Hermit x Townsend's Warbler. Displaying Calliope Hummingbirds and nesting American Dippers always make the 'favorites' list. Featured among our eight finch species, Red Crossbills made an excellent showing as they bathed and drank by the dozen at Cold Springs. Barrow's Goldeneye, Canada Jay, and Chestnut-backed Chickadee each made its own memorable appearance.

We finished the trip with 178 bird species and 14 mammals. Summaries of our wildlife encounters are below, along with a list of favorite flora we encountered along our route. Enjoy the virtual adventure from our trip and join us next year for our return to Oregon's best birding!

## **BIRDS (178):**

Click the link below to access the master eBird trip report. Once you have accessed the report, you will first see the list of the 178 species we encountered, in taxonomic order. Clicking on the name of any species will take you to the eBird reference page for that bird. Clicking the green icons to the right will show you the checklists from all the birding spots where each species was encountered; clicking the blue dates will take you to the checklists themselves. Back on the main page, you can access the complete set of 66 checklists from the tour by clicking the center blue box at the top.

## **[Oregon's Woodpecker Wonderland | May 16-25, 2025 | eBird Trip Report](#)**

## **MAMMALS (13):**

**Western Gray Squirrel** (*Sciurus griseus*)—Seen at the hotel in Sisters and couple of times elsewhere in the mountains

**Douglas's Squirrel** (*Tamiasciurus douglasii*)—Seen at a number of sites in the Sisters area

**Yellow-bellied Marmot** (*Marmota flaviventris*)—Found on both our days in the southern Blitzen Valley

**Belding's Ground Squirrel** (*Spermophilus beldingi*)—First at Brothers rest area, then billions at Malheur HQ and widespread elsewhere in the Harney Basin; once more tempting a Prairie Falcon in Sisters

**Golden-mantled Ground Squirrel** (*Spermophilus lateralis*)—Fairly common in the Sisters and Metolius areas

**California Ground Squirrel** (*Otospermophilus beecheyi*)—Seen only once, crossing the road in the Metolius Basin

**Yellow-pine Chipmunk** (*Neotamias amoenus*)—The common chipmunk in the Sisters and Metolius areas

**Least Chipmunk** (*Neotamias minimus*)—Our first was at the Brothers rest stop and then several places elsewhere in the Malheur region

**Nuttall's Cottontail** (*Sylvilagus nuttallii nuttallii*)—The common subspecies of Mountain Cottontail in the Malheur region.

**North American River Otter** (*Lontra canadensis*)—Seen swimming in the Blitzen River near Malheur HQ

**Coyote** (*Canis latrans*)—Seen twice sauntering across fields, both at Malheur and in the Sisters area

**Mule Deer** (*Odocoileus hermionus*)—Widespread and common throughout the trip, including several that hung out at the Sisters hotel

**Pronghorn** (*Antilocapra americana*)—Seen on a few days in sagebrush habitats in the Malheur area

## **OTHER NOTABLE FAUNA**

Critters with an \* are included on Steve's iNaturalist page with the flora listed below.

\***"Valley" Common Garter Snake** (*Thamnophis sirtalis fitchi*)—Seen on our loop hike above Page Springs

\***Woolly Beech Aphid** (*Phyllaphis fagi*)—Strange little flying insects with feathery bluish-white wax threads; found on our hike to the head of Jack Creek

\***Echo Azure** (*Celastrina echo*)—a collection of them at a patch of mud near the Metolius River

\***Silver-spotted skipper** (*Epargyreus clarus*)—A couple seen and one photographed near the Metolius

**Pale Swallowtail** (*Papilio eurymedon*)—Our most common butterfly in the mountains

**Two-tailed Sallowtail** (*Papilio multicaudata*)—Seen at the Metolius River at Wizard Falls

**Milbert's Tortoiseshell** (*Aglais milberti*)—Fairly common in the Sisters area

**Mourning Cloak** (*Nymphalis antiopa*)—Seen only once, at Wizard Falls Hatchery

**Juniper Hairstreak** (*Callophrys gryneus*)—Found near Frenchglen

**Common Ringlet** (*Coenonympha californica*)—Common in the Malheur area, especially around sagebrush

## **BONUS: WILDFLOWERS & MORE**

We ran across several wildflowers and other fun flora from Malheur to the Cascades. The list below—in the order encountered—only covers the flora with photos as posted on Steve's iNaturalist page, which you can find from the link at the end of the list. Note that some of the observations have not been confirmed by other users.

Blue Larkspur (*Delphinium sp.*)—seen on our first hike at Sagehen Hill rest area

Silvery Lupine (*Lupinus argenteus*)— Sagehen Hill rest area

Slender Woodland Star (*Lithophragma tenellum*)— Sagehen Hill rest area

Mountain Goldenbean (*Thermopsis montana*)—Fairly widespread in the marshes of southern Blitzen Valley; aka False Lupine

Poet's Narcissus (*Narcissus poeticus*)—Remnants of a bygone era; a small patch was blooming near the old homestead site at Barnes Springs, outside of Frenchglen.

Desert Yellow Fleabane (*Erigeron linearis*)—Seen several places in desert habitats, with our best display on the bench above Page Springs Campground

Dwarf Lupine (*Lupinus Lepidus*)—See growing on the sides of the highway but also on the bench above Page Springs

Linearleaf Phacelia (*Phacelia linearis*)—During our loop hike on the bench above Page Springs Campground

Littleleaf Horsebrush (*Tetradymia glabrata*)—Also on the bench above Page Springs Campground

Longhorn Seablush (*Plectritis macrocera*)—bench above Page Springs Campground

Bitterroot (*Lewisia rediviva*)—bench above Page Springs Campground

Narrowleaf Skullcap (*Scutellaria angustifolia*)—bench above Page Springs Campground

Low Pussytoes (*Antennaria dimorpha*)—bench above Page Springs Campground

Royal Beardtongue (*Penstemon speciosus*)—One the downslope of the loop trail of Page springs

Nevada Sweet Pea (*Lathyrus lanszwertii*)—Widespread in the prescribed burn along Three Creek Road

Primrose sp. (Family Primulaceae)—These scarlet flowers may have been planted, but they were glowing from an island at the Head of Jack Creek.

Wax Currant (*Ribes cereum*)—Common shrub in the Cascades

Western Skunk Cabbage (*Lysichiton americanus*)—Excellent specimens seen at Trout Creek Swamp

Gummy Gooseberry (*Ribes lobbii*)—on the trail to Trout Creek Swamp

Hooker's Fairybells (*Prosartes hookeri*)—On the trail at Canyon Creek

Pacific Trillium (*Trillium ovatum*) —On the trail at Canyon Creek

Western Rattlesnake Plantain (*Goodyera oblongifolia*) —On the trail at Canyon Creek

[Link to Steve's iNaturalist page](#)