

Birding Canyon Country

Species List | September 16-24, 2025

with Naturalist Journeys



Compiled by guide Barb Jording with guide Steve Grace. Our clients included Jon, Louise, Richard, Joan & John.

Our trip began in the lowlands around St. George, Utah, where an early morning bonus bird walk revealed Abert's Towhee, Verdin, and Anna's Hummingbird—each typical of Mojave Desert scrub rather than the Colorado Plateau and the higher elevations of the national parks we were headed toward.

Along reservoirs and rivers we watched an American Dipper diving and feeding in the cold, fast-flowing waters of the Virgin River in Zion National Park, a Greater Roadrunner on a leisurely stroll along the reservoir's edge (not the typical dash), and a lone White-faced Ibis foraging quietly.

In the scrubby sagebrush canyonlands, a covey of Gambel's Quail shuffled through thickets. Say's Phoebe sallied from rocks and shrubs to catch insects in midair, while a ground-foraging Sage Thrasher, with its distinctive yellow eye, ran quietly for cover.

In mixed pine and coniferous forests we encountered Pygmy Nuthatches moving in small chattering flocks through the pine crowns, joined by White-breasted and Red-breasted Nuthatches, Brown Creeper, Juniper Titmouse, and Mountain Chickadee, each favoring different levels of the forest. The flashing black-and-white of a Clark's Nutcracker as it swooped between trees was a distinctive sighting.

A special treat was a flock of Pinyon Jays, maintaining tight group cohesion with constant, harsh nasal calls as they foraged on pinyon seeds extracted from pinecones.

In open rocky areas, often with scattered scrub or trees, we listened to the cascading call of a Canyon Wren, watched a Rock Wren glean food from crevices, and admired a striking Lewis's Woodpecker flashing iridescent green and pink as it flew repeatedly from a tall ponderosa pine snag—a reminder of its reliance on mature conifers for nesting and foraging.

The high cliffs held their own specialists: a California Condor soaring just overhead, a flock of White-throated Swifts slicing through the air, and a Peregrine Falcon with wings tucked in swift pursuit of prey.

From desert lowlands to high cliffs and forests, each habitat revealed its signature species, making the journey a rewarding study in the diversity of the Colorado Plateau's birdlife.

The eBird link below details the 98 species of birds our group observed during the tour. 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.

[Birding Canyon Country | September 16-24, 2025 | eBird Trip Report](#)

Following is a list of the birds, mammals, reptiles and insects we were fortunate to observe during the trip.

BIRDS: (98) Species Recorded of which 3 were seen by Guide only

DUCKS, GEESE, AND WATERFOWL: Anatidae — (8)

Canada Goose *Branta canadensis* — Found on three days of the tour in lake (Tonaquint) or reservoir (Jackson Flat & Wide Hollow) settings.

Cinnamon Teal *Spatula cyanoptera* — Scoped view at Wide Hollow Reservoir.

American Wigeon *Mareca americana* — Found in both Jackson Flat and Wide Hollow Reservoirs.

Mallard *Anas platyrhynchos* — Commonly found in suitable bodies of water; lake and reservoirs.

Green-winged Teal *Anas crecca* — Scoped on Jackson Flat Reservoir.

Ring-necked Duck *Aythya collaris* — Found at Wide Hollow Reservoir.

Lesser Scaup *Aythya affinis* — Scoped at Wide Hollow Reservoir.

Ruddy Duck *Oxyura jamaicensis* — Several seen at Jackson Flat Reservoir with their distinctive tail sticking up out of the water.

NEW WORLD QUAIL: Odontophoridae — (1)

Gambel's Quail *Callipepla gambelii* — Wonderful views of covey on ground and fence at Best Friends Animal Society.

PHEASANTS, GROUSE, AND ALLIES: Phasianidae — (1)

Wild Turkey *Meleagris gallopavo* — Seen every day in front of Zion Lodge and at Best Friends Animal Society.

PIGEONS AND DOVES: Columbidae — (2)

Eurasian Collared-Dove (I) *Streptopelia decaocto* — Fly by at Tonaquint Nature Center in St George.

Mourning Dove *Zenaida macroura* — Encountered on 3 days either heard or in flight.

CUCKOOS: Cuculidae — (1)

Greater Roadrunner *Geococcyx californianus* — Good view with scope at Jackson Flat Reservoir. Surprise find at this location. We watched the GRRO as it walked and fed along the water's edge.

NIGHTJARS AND ALLIES: Caprimulgidae — (1)

Common Nighthawk *Chordeiles minor* — Seen by guests in lead van as we departed Coral Pink Sand Dunes after sunset.

SWIFTS: Apodidae — (1)

White-throated Swift *Aeronautes saxatalis* — Seen slicing through the air above Petroglyph Panel at Capitol Reef NP.

HUMMINGBIRDS: Trochilidae — (4)

Black-chinned Hummingbird *Archilochus alexandri* — Viewed at Best Friends Animal Society hummingbird feeders.

Anna's Hummingbird *Calypte anna* — Several seen and heard at Tonaquint Nature Center in St George. A low elevation species not to be found elsewhere on the tour.

Rufous Hummingbird *Selasphorus rufus* — Seen behind Jacob Lake Inn as it checked out a red fire extinguisher.

Broad-tailed Hummingbird *Selasphorus platycercus* — See at Red Canyon Visitor Center enroute to Bryce Canyon NP.

RAILS, GALLINULES, AND COOTS: Rallidae — (1)

American Coot *Fulica americana* — Hundreds on the 2 reservoirs we visited.

PLOVERS AND LAPWINGS: Charadriidae — (1)

Killdeer *Charadrius vociferus* — Heard and seen at Tonaquint Nature Center in St George.

SANDPIPERS AND ALLIES: Scolopacidae — (1)

Spotted Sandpiper *Actitis macularius* — Spotted bobbing its tail while working the edge of Jackson Flat Reservoir.

GREBES: Podicipedidae — (3)

Pied-billed Grebe *Podilymbus podiceps* — Easily found on calm bodies of water - lakes and reservoirs.

Eared Grebe *Podiceps nigricollis* — Scoped at Jackson Flat Reservoir.

Western Grebe *Aechmophorus occidentalis* — Seen at Jackson Flat Reservoir.

CORMORANTS AND SHAGS: Phalacrocoracidae — (1)

Double-crested Cormorant *Nannopterum auritum* — Encountered at Jackson Flat Reservoir.

HERONS, EGRETS, AND BITTERNS: Ardeidae — (2)

Green Heron *Butorides virescens* — Close up view at Tonaquint Nature Center in St George.

Great Blue Heron *Ardea herodias* — Three seen at Jackson Flat Reservoir and one at Tonaquint Nature Center.

IBIS AND SPOONBILLS: Threskiornithidae — (1)

White-faced Ibis *Plegadis chihi*—Seen at Jackson Flat Reservoir

NEW WORLD VULTURES: Cathartidae — (2)

California Condor *Gymnogyps californianus* — Wonderfully close sighting of V3 (male, 8 yrs, 4 mos old hatched at Oregon Zoo. Info from www.condorspotter.com) as he soared over us at Navajo Bridge and surrounding cliffs.

Turkey Vulture *Cathartes aura* — One of the most ubiquitous species seen on the trip; every day except the last.

HAWKS, EAGLES, AND KITES: Accipitridae — (3)

Cooper's Hawk *Astur cooperii* — One sighting aloft at Gifford Homestead in Capitol Reef NP.

Northern Harrier *Circus hudsonius* — Harrier's white rump patch viewed from Escalante Outfitters.

Red-tailed Hawk *Buteo jamaicensis* — Many locations, seen soaring and perched.

KINGFISHERS: Alcedinidae — (1)

Belted Kingfisher *Megaceryle alcyon* — Heard and seen at Jackson Flat Reservoir.

WOODPECKERS: Picidae — (5)

Williamson's Sapsucker *Sphyrapicus thyroideus* — Early morning sighting at Sunrise Point, Bryce Canyon NP.

Red-naped Sapsucker *Sphyrapicus nuchalis* — Viewed on the Bristlecone Pine Loop Trail at Bryce Canyon NP.

Lewis's Woodpecker *Melanerpes lewis* — Wonderful views of these iridescent woodpeckers perched and flying out and back from a Ponderosa Pine snag on the road to Capitol Reef.

Hairy Woodpecker *Dryobates villosus* — Good views by all at Le Fevre Overlook and the 4 hikers at Best Friends.

Northern Flicker *Colaptes auratus* — Red-shafted Race. Frequent sightings at many locations, usually in flight.

FALCONS AND CARACARAS: Falconidae — (2)

American Kestrel *Falco sparverius* — Several locations, most memorable was 3 in the same snag at Le Fevre Overlook.
Peregrine Falcon *Falco peregrinus* — Speeding by with wings tucked close to its body on a stoop, this falcon was sighted at the end of the Bristlecone Pine Loop trail at Bryce Canyon NP.

TYRANT FLYCATCHERS: Tyrannidae — (4)

Western Wood-Pewee *Contopus sordidulus* — Found at Tonaquint Nature Center, St George.
Black Phoebe *Sayornis nigricans* — One sighting at Tonaquint Nature Center, St George.
Say's Phoebe *Sayornis saya* — Numerous locations, usually conspicuously perched, with dark tail wagging.
Vermilion Flycatcher *Pyrocephalus rubinus* — Female found at Tonaquint Nature Center, St George.

VIREOS, SHRIKE-BABBLERS, AND ERPORNIS: Vireonidae — (1)

Plumbeous Vireo *Vireo plumbeus* — Found in Zion National Park.

CROWS, JAYS, AND MAGPIES: Corvidae — (7)

Pinyon Jay *Gymnorhinus cyanocephalus* — Memorable sighting of a large flock feeding in Pinyon Pines either side of Utah 89A after leaving Le Fevre Overlook on the way to Jacob Lake Inn.
Steller's Jay *Cyanocitta stelleri* — Fairly common, found frequently.
Woodhouse's Scrub-Jay *Aphelocoma woodhouseii* — The most common jay of the trip, found almost daily.
Black-billed Magpie *Pica hudsonia* — Sighted on the final day of the trip at Llama Adventures behind Capitol Reef Resort.
Clark's Nutcracker *Nucifraga columbiana* — Found at both Sunrise Point, Zion NP and Escalante Petrified Forest.
American Crow *Corvus brachyrhynchos* — One sighting while bonus birding at Tonaquint Nature Center.
Common Raven *Corvus corax* — Couldn't miss this large, loud corvid. Found each day of the trip.

TITS, CHICKADEES, AND TITMICE: Paridae — (2)

Mountain Chickadee *Poecile gambeli* — Heard and seen on Bristlecone Pine Loop Trail and at Jacob Lake Inn.
Juniper Titmouse *Baeolophus ridgwayi* — One seen at Le Fevre Overlook.

PENDULINE-TITS: Remizidae — (1)

Verdin *Auriparus flaviceps* — A low desert species found at Tonaquint Nature Center, St George.

SWALLOWS: Hirundinidae — (3)

Violet-green Swallow *Tachycineta thalassina* — Seen at Best Friends Animal Society by the 4 hikers.
Northern Rough-winged Swallow *Stelgidopteryx serripennis* — Flying over Jackson Flat Reservoir.
Barn Swallow *Hirundo rustica* — Found at 2 locations.

LONG-TAILED TITS: Aegithalidae — (1)

Bushtit *Psaltiriparus minimus* — Flocks seen and heard at Zion NP and Le Fevre Overlook, looking like flying gray ping pong balls.

NUTHATCHES: Sittidae — (3)

White-breasted Nuthatch *Sitta carolinensis* — Several locations, most notably on post directly in front of us at LEWO tree.
Pygmy Nuthatch *Sitta pygmaea* — Heard at Jacob Lake Inn and seen at Bristlecone Pine Loop Trail, Bryce NP.
Red-breasted Nuthatch *Sitta canadensis* — Found on the Bristlecone Pine Loop Trail, Bryce NP.

TREECREEPERS: Certhiidae — (1)

Brown Creeper *Certhia americana* — Observed creeping up a conifer at both Sunrise Point and Bristlecone Pine Loop trail, Bryce Canyon NP.

GNATCATCHERS: Polioptilidae — (1)

Blue-gray Gnatcatcher *Polioptila caerulea* — Several sightings of individuals twitching their long tail, showing white outer feathers.

WRENS: Troglodytidae — (3)

Rock Wren *Salpinctes obsoletus* — Acting fearless, presenting right in front of us at Navajo Bridge and Llama Adventures.

Canyon Wren *Catherpes mexicanus* — Seen and heard on the Zion NP River Walk and Escalante Petrified Forest.

Bewick's Wren *Thryomanes bewickii* — Seen at Tonaquint Nature Center and Zion NP.

DIPPERS: Cinclidae — (1)

American Dipper *Cinclus mexicanus* — On the Virgin River in Zion, we watched this passerine performing its “Dipper Dance,” then plunging headfirst into the rushing cold water to find aquatic delights, returning to its rock to dance again.

STARLINGS: Sturnidae — (1)

European Starling *Sturnus vulgaris* — Seen at the Wild Thyme Cafe in Kanab.

MOCKINGBIRDS AND THRASHERS: Mimidae — (1)

Sage Thrasher *Oreoscoptes montanus* — Good views for all at Llama Adventures behind Capitol Reef Resort.

THRUSHES AND ALLIES: Turdidae — (2)

Western Bluebird *Sialia mexicana* — Everyone had good views at Grafton, seen several other locations as well.

American Robin *Turdus migratorius* — Found on every day of the tour, except one!

OLD WORLD SPARROWS: Passeridae — (1)

House Sparrow (I) *Passer domesticus* — Found in every location where there were people and food crumbs

FINCHES, EUPHONIAS, AND ALLIES: Fringillidae — (5)

House Finch *Haemorhous mexicanus* — Found on 2 days of the tour.

Cassin's Finch *Haemorhous cassinii* — Excellent views of males and females at Jacob Lake Inn.

Pine Siskin *Spinus pinus* — Found at Jacob Lake Inn on the Kaibab Plateau.

Lesser Goldfinch *Spinus psaltria* — Seen at several locations feeding on flower seeds.

American Goldfinch *Spinus tristis* — Only one sighting, at Grafton.

NEW WORLD SPARROWS: Passerellidae — (10)

Chipping Sparrow *Spizella passerina* — Found on 4 days at Grafton, Jackson Flat Reservoir, Jacob Lake Inn and LEWO tree.

Brewer's Sparrow *Spizella breweri* — This rather plain sparrow was seen at 5 different locations.

Lark Sparrow *Chondestes grammacus* — A group of 15 were spotted feeding on the ground at Grafton.

Vesper Sparrow *Pooecetes gramineus* — Seen at both Le Fevre Overlook and Jacob Lake Inn.

Dark-eyed Junco *Junco hyemalis* — Gray-headed race found at Jacob Lake Inn.

White-crowned Sparrow *Zonotrichia leucophrys* — Found at 3 locations including everywhere you looked at Llama Adventures, Capitol Reef Resort.

Song Sparrow *Melospiza melodia* — Infrequent, but heard and seen at Tonaquint, River Walk in Zion and Llama Adventures.

Abert's Towhee *Melospiza aberti* — Found at Tonaquint Nature Center, the only Mojave Desert habitat on the trip.

Green-tailed Towhee *Pipilo chlorurus* — Briefly seen at Natural Bridge, Bryce Canyon NP.

Spotted Towhee *Pipilo maculatus* — Seen by some performing the towhee two-step at Mossy Cave, Capitol Reef NP.

TROUPIALS AND ALLIES: Icteridae — (2)

Brewer's Blackbird *Euphagus cyanocephalus* — Spotted at Jacob Lake Inn.

Great-tailed Grackle *Quiscalus mexicanus* — Seen at Jackson Flat Reservoir at water's edge.

NEW WORLD WARBLERS: Parulidae — (4)

Orange-Crowned Warbler *Leiothlypis celata* — Seen only at Tonaquint Nature Center, St George.

Yellow Warbler *Setophaga petechia* — Few individuals spotted in trees at Tonaquint and Jackson Flat Reservoir

Yellow-rumped Warbler *Setophaga coronata* — Audubon's subspecies, males and females seen and heard at Jacob Lake Inn, Prairie Dog pulloff in Bryce Canyon NP and Llama Adventures, Capitol Reef Resort.

Wilson's Warbler *Cardellina pusilla* — Seen at Tonaquint Nature Center and Llama Adventures.

CARDINALS AND ALLIES: Cardinalidae — (3)

Summer Tanager *Piranga rubra* — One female spotted at Grafton.

Western Tanager *Piranga ludoviciana* — Females seen at Riverside Walk in Zion NP and Jacob Lake Inn.

Lazuli Bunting *Passerina amoena* — Two females found on the Bristlecone Pine Loop Trail at Bryce Canyon NP.

MAMMALS: — (11)

Mule Deer *Odocoileus hemionus* — Found on most days of the trip; bucks, does and still spotted fawns.

Desert Cottontail *Sylvilagus audubonii* — Feeding at the edge of bushes at Llama Adventures, Capitol Reef Resort.

Utah Prairie Dog *Cynomys parvidens* — Watched 2 sentries on their mounds at Bryce Canyon NP prairie dog village.

White-tailed Antelope Squirrel *Ammospermophilus leucurus* — One seen at Llama Adventures.

Golden-mantled Ground Squirrel *Callospermophilus lateralis* — Found on Bristlecone Pine Loop Trail, Bryce NP

Rock Squirrel *Otospermophilus variegatus* — Common in areas with people and picnic tables, especially Zion NP.

Cliff Chipmunk *Neotamias dorsalis* — Seen several times in Zion

Least Chipmunk *Neotamias minimus* — Smallest and quickest of the chipmunks, seen in more open areas of Bryce Canyon NP.

Uinta Chipmunk *Neotamias umbrinus* — Prefers higher elevations and forested areas, seen on Bristlecone Pine Loop Trail, Bryce Canyon NP.

Hopi Chipmunk *Neotamias rufus* — More reddish than the other chipmunks, this chipmy was found at Llama Adventures, Bryce Canyon Resort.

Muskrat *Ondatra zibethicus* — Seen swimming in Jackson Flat Reservoir.

REPTILES: —(2)

Common Sagebrush Lizard *Sceloporus graciosus* — Seen on the Riverwalk Trail in Zion NP

Red-Eared Slider *Trachemys scripta elegans* — Seen in the pond at Tonaquint Nature Center, St George

INSECTS: —(2)

Dusky Darkling Beetle *Eleodes Obscura* — Weeping rock trail in Zion NP

Monarch Butterfly *Danaus plexippus* — Seen by Louise in Capitol Reef NP. We also found milkweed plants (*Asclepias*), an important host plant for Monarch eggs and caterpillars, on the Petroglyph Panels in Capitol Reef.

LOCATIONS AND NOTES

Day 1: Tuesday, 9-16-2025: St George, Tonaquint Nature Center, Grafton, Zion NP

Day 2: Wednesday, 9-17-2025: Zion NP - Big Bend, Weeping Rock, Riverside Trail, Zion Lodge

Day 3: Thursday, 9-18-2025: On the road in Zion, Checkerboard Mesa, Kanab & Vicinity, Jackson Flat Reservoir

Day 4: Friday, 9-19-2025: Le Fevre Overlook, On the road (Utah 89A), Jacob Lake Inn, Navajo Bridge

Day 5: Saturday, 9-20-2025: Best Friends Animal Society, Red Canyon Visitor Center, Bryce Canyon NP & Lodge

Day 6: Sunday, 9-21-2025: Bryce Canyon NP - Lodge, Sunrise Point, Bristlecone Pine Loop Trail, Natural Bridge

Day 7: Monday, 9-22-2025: Bryce Canyon NP - Mossy Cave, Escalante Petrified Forest, Wide Hollow Reservoir, Escalante Outfitters, LEWO Tree, Boulder Hwy Viewpoint

Day 8: Tuesday, 9-23-2025: Capitol Reef Resort Llama Adventures, Gifford Homestead, Capitol Gorge Trail, Petroglyph Panel

Day 9: Wednesday, 9-24-2025: Drive from Torrey to St George