

Yellowstone National Park: Birding & Wildlife Tour Species List 2021



Naturalist Journeys Yellowstone Trip List September 18- 25, 2021

Compiled by Pat Lueders

With guides Pat Lueders, Hugh Simmons and Bryan Calk, with 11 participants: Joan, John, Herbert, Susan, Don, Ann, Jane, Gordon, Donna, Andrew, & Darlene



Great Gray Owl: Pat Lueders

SUMMARY: What wonderful luck we had touring this beautiful part of our country! We began in Idaho, traveled the expanse of Yellowstone National Park, drove to the “Top of the World” Beartooth Pass, found Gray wolves in Lamar Valley, and Grizzly Bears in Montana. We saw 85 bird species and 13 mammals, certainly a trip we will never forget!

(HO)= Distinctive enough to be counted as heard only
(I)=introduced

BIRDS (85 species recorded, of which 1 was heard only):

DUCKS, GEESE AND SWANS: Anatidae (16)

Canada Goose *Branta canadensis*—Seen often at many locations around water

Trumpeter Swan *Cygnus buccinator*—Our first sighting of a pair of swans was in Henry’s Fork at Harriman State Park; a pair with four cygnets fittingly seen in Swan Lake

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Blue-winged Teal *Spatula discors*—A few seen in Henry's Lake & Swan Lake
Northern Shoveler *Spatula clypeata*—Seen in Henry's Lake & ponds in Lamar Valley
Gadwall *Mareca strepera*—Seen in breeding plumage in Henry's Lake
American Wigeon *Mareca americana*—Surprisingly large number seen in Henry's Lake
Mallard *Anas platyrhynchos*—Seen often in many areas with water
Northern Pintail *Anas acuta*—Three spotted in Henry's Fork at Harriman State Park
Redhead *Aythya americana*—Very large number seen in Silver Lake at Harriman State Park
Ring-necked Duck *Aythya collaris*—Seen in Henry's Lake & Silver Lake at Harriman State Park
Lesser Scaup *Aythya affinis*—Males & females with other duck species at Henry's Lake
Harlequin Duck *Histrionicus histrionicus*—We watched two in alternate plumage feeding in the rapids during our visit to LeHardy's Rapids
Bufflehead *Bucephala albeola*—A nice number of individuals in Henry's Lake
Hooded Merganser *Lophodytes cucullatus*—Seen with Common Mergansers in Beartooth Lake
Common Merganser *Mergus merganser*—Energetically feeding in the rapids with Harlequin Ducks at LeHardy's Rapids; seen often at other locations
Ruddy Duck *Oxyura jamaicensis*—Nice numbers, some in breeding plumage, with other duck species in Henry's Lake

PARTRIDGES, PHEASANTS AND ALLIES: Phasianidae (2)

Ruffed Grouse *Bonasa umbellus*—What a surprise! Two spotted by Bryan along the road on drive at Firehole Lake
Dusky Grouse *Dendragapus obscurus*—As we were leaving Artist Point, we found this grouse in the parking lot! A life bird for many!!

GREBES: Podicipedidae (5)

Pied-billed Grebe *Podilymbus podiceps*—Seen on our visit to Henry's Lake
Horned Grebe *Podiceps auritus*—Wow! What a thrill to see this & other grebe species in breeding plumage at Henry's Lake
Red-necked Grebe *Podiceps grisegena*—Two different individuals seen on our visit to Henry's Lake
Eared Grebe *Podiceps nigricollis*—Other striking species in breeding plumage seen at Henry's Lake
Western Grebe *Aechmophorus occidentalis*—Completing our "grand slam" of grebes, good scope views at Henry's Lake

PIGEONS AND DOVES: Columbidae (3)

Rock Pigeon *Columba livia* (1)—Seen in large numbers in Gardiner
Eurasian Collared-Dove *Streptopelia decaocto* (1)—Seen on utility wires in Gardiner & Bozeman
Mourning Dove *Zenaidura macroura*—Oddly, only seen once, in town of Mammoth

RAILS, COOTS AND ALLIES: Rallidae (1)

American Coot *Fulica americana*—Frequently seen at all lakes we visited

PLOVERS AND LAPWINGS: Charadriidae (1)

Killdeer *Charadrius vociferus*—Oddly, only seen once, on the travertine terraces at Mammoth Hot Springs

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GULLS AND TERNS: Laridae (2)

Ring-billed Gull *Larus delawarensis*—Seen with California Gulls for nice comparison at Henry's Lake

California Gull *Larus californicus*—Juveniles & adults seen with Ring-billed Gulls at Henry's Lake

CORMORANTS: Phalacrocoracidae (1)

Double-crested Cormorant *Phalacrocorax auritus*—Seen perched & diving at Henry's Lake

PELICANS: Pelecanidae (1)

American White Pelican *Pelecanus erythrorhynchos*—Seen flying over the Snake River at the lodge, one at Henry's Lake, & large flock at Harriman SP

HERONS AND EGRETS: Ardeidae (1)

Great Blue Heron *Ardea herodias*—Seen often along most water features

NEW WORLD VULTURES: Cathartidae (1)

Turkey Vulture *Cathartes aura*—Best seen soaring at Henry's Lake

OSPREY: Pandionidae (1)

Osprey *Pandion haliaetus*—Vocalizing & feeding at close range on the Snake River from the lodge

HAWKS, KITES AND EAGLES: Accipitridae (5)

Golden Eagle *Aquila chrysaetos*—Success! Seen at a distance on the second visit to Slough Creek where they nest

Northern Harrier *Circus cyaneus*—Seen well hunting over the fields on drive at Henry's Lake

Cooper's Hawk *Accipiter cooperii*—Perched in tree for good looks on walk at Harriman SP

Bald Eagle *Haliaeetus leucocephalus*—Seen almost daily near all water features

Red-tailed Hawk *Buteo jamaicensis*—Most frequently seen hawk, perched & soaring, at many locations

OWLS: Strigidae (1)

Great Gray Owl *Strix nebulosa*—One of the favorite birds of the trip! Spotted by Darlene hunting while it was perched on a low post as we drove from visit to Henry's Lake. Happily, watched & photographed this sought after species at length.

KINGFISHERS: Alcedinidae (1)

Belted Kingfisher *Megaceryle alcyon*—Male & female feeding on Silver Lake at Harriman SP

WOODPECKERS: Picidae (3)

American Three-toed Woodpecker *Picoides dorsalis*—Great find! We found a pair on our hike at Slough Creek after seeing trees with their distinctive feeding pattern on pine bark.

Hairy Woodpecker *Dryobates villosus*—Seen well on walk at Harriman SP

Northern Flicker *Colaptes auratus*—Seen perched from the parking lot at Harriman SP & on Pebble Creek Trail

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FALCONS AND CARACARAS: Falconidae (3)

American Kestrel *Falco sparverius*—Good looks at a pair on visit to Henry's Lake; seen perched during drives

Peregrine Falcon *Falco peregrinus*—Seen flying low over Henry's Lake

Prairie Falcon *Falco mexicanus*—At least one seen flying low on visit to Beartooth Pass

TYRANT FLYCATCHERS: Tyrannidae (1)

Western Wood-Pewee *Contopus sordidulus*—(HO) Heard vocalizing while on walk at Harriman SP

CROWS AND JAYS: Corvidae (5)

Canada Jay *Perisoreus canadensis*—Lucky sighting of a small group while visiting a rest area near Island Lake

Steller's Jay *Cyanocitta stelleri*—Oddly, only seen at our hotel in Cooke City & the restaurant at Silvergate

Black-billed Magpie *Pica hudsonia*—A fun species, seen daily in all habitats!

Clark's Nutcracker *Nucifraga columbiana*—We were surprised to see this species very often including perched at Old Faithful, on walk at Cooke City, & Slough Creek

Common Raven *Corvus corax*—Seen often & daily at all habitats in good numbers

TITS AND CHICKADEES: Paridae (2)

Black-capped Chickadee *Poecile atricapillus*—Finally, small group found in the rest area on return to Bozeman on the last day

Mountain Chickadee *Poecile gambeli*—Seen well & often on walks, first sighting at flock at Harriman SP

LARKS: Alaudidae (1)

Horned Lark *Eremophila alpestris*—Vocalizing & seen on the ground on visit to Beartooth Pass

SWALLOWS AND MARTINS: Hirundinidae (2)

Barn Swallow *Hirundo rustica*—Feeding over the fields on visit to Henry's Lake

Cliff Swallow *Petrochelidon pyrrhonota*—Seen over the water on visit to Henry's Lake

KINGLETS: Regulidae (1)

Ruby-crowned Kinglet *Regulus calendula*—Seen well on walks at Harriman SP & at Slough Creek

NUTHATCHES: Sittidae (1)

Red-breasted Nuthatch *Sitta canadensis*—Seen & heard on walk at Cooke City

CREEPERS: Certhiidae (1)

Brown Creeper *Certhia americana*—Heard, then spotted while waiting at Beartooth highway construction & seen on walk at Slough Creek

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WRENS: Troglodytidae (1)

Marsh Wren *Cistothorus palustris*—Quick glimpses of this shy skulker at Harriman SP

DIPPERS: Cinclidae (1)

American Dipper *Cinclus mexicanus*—We had great luck watching many individuals of this popular species feeding in the rapids at Limber Pine Camp grounds, Pebble Creek, and LeHardy's Rapids

STARLINGS AND MYNAS: Sturnidae (1)

European Starling *Sturnus vulgaris* (I)—Seen perched on drives & good numbers in Gardiner

MOCKINGBIRDS AND THRASHERS: Mimidae (1)

Gray Catbird *Dumetella carolinensis*—Heard & seen feeding on berries in trees near Angler's Lodge in Idaho

THRUSHES: Turdidae (3)

Mountain Bluebird *Sialia currucoides*—Flock seen on drive at Firehole Lake

Townsend's Solitaire *Myadestes townsendi*—Seen best perched at treetop on visit to Mammoth Hot Springs

American Robin *Turdus migratorius*—Seen daily at many different habitats

WAXWINGS: Bombycillidae (1)

Cedar Waxwing *Bombycilla cedrorum*—A pair seen eating berries in the trees across from Angler's Lodge

OLD WORLD SPARROWS: Passeridae (1)

House Sparrow *Passer domesticus* (I)—Seen in the parking lots in Gardiner

PIPITS AND WAGTAILS: Motacillidae (1)

American Pipit *Anthus rubescens*—Heard in the fields around Henry's Lake & a surprise sighting with Killdeer on the travertine terraces at Mammoth

FINCHES: Fringillidae (3)

Red Crossbill *Loxia curvirostra*—Heard by Bryan in pines behind restrooms at Rock Creek Vista; close looks at males & females

Pine Siskin *Spinus pinus*—Heard & then seen in the pines on the path to view the Grand Canyon of Yellowstone

American Goldfinch *Spinus tristis*—Seen in good numbers on the walk at Slough Creek

NEW WORLD SPARROWS: Passerellidae (3)

Dark-eyed Junco *Junco hyemalis*—Two subspecies seen: Oregon at Harriman Lake & Pink-sided near Cooke City.

White-crowned Sparrow *Zonotrichia leucophrys*—Most frequently seen & heard sparrow at many locations

Vesper Sparrow *Pooecetes gramineus*—Seen on the dirt road on visit to south Henry's Lake

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NEW WORLD BLACKBIRDS: Icteridae (3)

Western Meadowlark *Sturnella neglecta*—Seen along the dirt road on trip to Henry's Lake

Red-winged Blackbird *Agelaius phoeniceus*—Good numbers in the fields at Henry's Lake

Brewer's Blackbird *Euphagus cyanocephalus*—Seen frequently; most often in parking lots at many locations

NEW WORLD WARBLERS: Parulidae (2)

Yellow-rumped Warbler *Setophaga coronata*—Nice views at Harriman Lake SP, across from Angler's Lodge, and at the rest area on trip to Bozeman

Wilson's Warbler *Cardellina pusilla*—Feeding with Yellow-rumped in parking lot at Harriman SP

Mammals (13 species)

Pronghorn *Antilocapra Americana*—Beautiful! Seen almost daily at many locations

American Bison *Bison bison*—Great numbers seen migrating from higher altitudes into the Lamar Valley, some with newborn calves. We were stopped along the road many times for herds to cross.

Rocky Mountain Goat *Oreamnos americanus (1)*—One seen on our drive in Lamar Valley

Moose *Alces alces*—We had great prolonged views of a moose in the Snake River from Angler's Lodge; additional sightings of a male, female, and juvenile in the willows near Cooke City

Elk *Cervus elaphus*—Large numbers stay in Mammoth Village & additional sightings in & near Gardiner

Mule Deer *Odocoileus hemionus*—Lone individuals seen on drives in Lamar Valley

Coyote *Canis latrans*—We watched a lone coyote close to the road, then crossing behind us, on our return from Roosevelt Lodge. Howling could be heard at night in Cooke City.

Gray Wolf *Canis lupus*—We had great views from the road of a lone black Gray Wolf at close range on a visit to Lamar Valley. At sunset, we returned to the Lamar Valley to a known area for a pack at sunset & watched a pack of 19 beginning their evening hunt. This was the most popular sighting of the trip!

Brown (Grizzly) Bear *Ursus arctos*—What great luck! We were returning to Gardiner near Mammoth when traffic was stopped for a close male Grizzly Bear, and we watched him for a length of time. On the last day, we stopped at Tom Miner Valley to get good scope views of a male, female, and cub in the field.

American Pika *Ochotona princeps*—A target species on our visit to the top of Beartooth Pass, we watched this very small and cute mountain-dwelling mammal for a length of time.

Least Chipmunk *Tamias minimus*—We had many views of this very cute chipmunk at many locations.

American Red Squirrel *Tamiasciurus hudsonicus*—Good sightings of this lovely squirrel, best at Slough Creek.

Muskrat *Ondatra zibethicus*—Seen at Harriman SP in Silver Lake.