Oregon Woodpecker Wonderland With Naturalist Journeys



May 18 – 27, 2022 Guided by Steve Shunk/Bryan Shirley

Tour Summary

What a wonderful trip to some of the most gorgeous scenery possible. The first half of the trip was around one of the birding hotspots of the Western US: Malhuer National Wildlife Refuge and it did not disappoint. The second half of the trip was in the pine forests of the Eastern Sierra Mountains around Bend and Sisters with lots of woodpeckers and lots of other exciting species. Covid made the trip challenging, but thanks to everyone being cooperative and flexible we managed to have a great trip.

Family or Species Common Name: Scientific Name

DUCKS, GEESE, AND SWANS: ANATIDAE

Canada Goose Branta canadensis — Seen in large numbers daily. Lots of goslings as well

Snow Goose *Anser caerulescens*—2 late migrants were hanging out with the Canadas at the water treatment ponds just outside of Hines

Trumpeter Swan Cygnus buccinator — One nesting pair at Malhuer was seen on 2 days

Cinnamon Teal Spatula cyanoptera— Common on the Malhuer half of the trip

Northern Shoveler *Spatula clypeata*— Not seen in large numbers, but we recorded them on every day we were at Malhuer

Gadwall *Mareca strepera*— A few recorded daily at Malhuer

American Wigeon Mareca americana— We had good looks at this species at the Burns fishing ponds

Mallard Anas platyrhynchos — Common and seen almost every day of the tour

Northern Pintail Anas acuta — Only recorded 2 days in the marshy areas along Hotchkiss Lane

Green-winged Teal Anas crecca— We had a small bunch on our first full birding day in the flooded fields north of Burns

Canvasback Aythya valisineria— A few at the water treatment ponds on our first day and then again in the large pond along the road heading to Malhuer from Burns

Redhead Aythya americana — Recorded a few times the first 2 days of the trip in ponds around Burns

Ring-necked Duck Aythya collaris — Seen at the Hines Water Treatment Ponds

Lesser Scaup Aythya affinis — Only recorded once in the large pond on Hotchkiss Lane near Burns

Bufflehead *Bucephala albeola*— First seen in the pond on Hotchkiss Lane near Burns and later wonderful looks several pair near the shore of Elk Lake along the Cascade Lakes Road

Common Goldeneye Bucephala clangula— Only recorded once during the tour at the Burns Fishing Pond

Barrow's Goldeneye Bucephala islandica— 2 pair were observed diving in the small patches of open water in Elk Lake

Common Merganser *Mergus merganser*— Recorded one day at Malhuer and we had a female sitting on a log just a few feet away from us on the Metolius River

Ruddy Duck Oxyura jamaicensis— A few at the Water Treatment Ponds and then a couple of other locations the first day of the trip

NEW WORLD QUAIL: Odontophoridae

California Quail *Callipepla californica*— Pairs were seen running around most days, but the best looks we had had at these guys was probably around the hotel in Frenchglen

PARTRIDGES AND PHEASANTS: Phasianidae

Chukar Alectoris chukar — Heard calling from far up the mountains surrounding Frenchglen **Ring-necked Pheasant** Phasianus colchicus — Several seen and many more heard during our days at Malhuer

GREBES: Podicipedidae

Pied-billed Grebe *Podilymbus podiceps*— Seen at the Hotchkiss Lane Pond and a few other times around Malhuer **Eared Grebe** *Podiceps nigricollis*— Beautiful birds in full breeding plumages seen around Malhuer

Western Grebe *Aechmophorus occidentalis*— Only seen one day – there were a few in one of the deeper lakes at Malhuer

PIGEONS AND DOVES: Columbidae

Rock Pigeon *Columba livia*— Seen daily around the towns. Also saw a "wild' one that appeared to be nesting in the cliffs where we were viewing bighorn sheep

Eurasian Collared-Dove *Streptopelia decaocto*— Common and seen most days

Mourning Dove Zenaida macroura— Common and seen in low numbers daily

NIGHTJARS: Caprimulgidae

Common Nighthawk *Chordeiles minor*— Saw two days at Malhuer. Couldn't have asked for a better look than the one perched above the trail on an exposed branch at Benson Pond

Common Poorwill Phalaenoptilus nuttallii— Heard 2 nights on the hill behind the hotel at Frenchglen

HUMMINGBIRDS: Trochilidae

Black-chinned Hummingbird *Archilochus alexandri*— Several were visiting the feeders at Malhuer NWR headquarters. We also recorded them a few other times around Frenchglen.

Calliope Hummingbird *Selasphorus calliope*— It took some patience, but we eventually located a nice male at the aptly named Calliope Crossing just outside of sisters.

RAILS, COOTS, AND ALLIES: Rallidae

Virginia Rail *Rallus limicola*— Awesome views of this seldom seen bird at Malhuer posing for photos only a few feet away.

Sora *Porzana carolina*— Nice but brief views our last morning at Malhuer at Benson Pond as it was sneaking around the reeds. We heard many more calling at this location as well.

American Coot Fulica americana — Large numbers seen each day at Malhuer NWR

CRANES: Gruidae

Sandhill Crane *Antigone canadensis*— Several pair each day at Malhuer including several just in front of our hotel in Frenchglen.

STILTS AND AVOCETS: Recurvirostridae

Black-necked Stilt *Himantopus mexicanus*— Seen in Potter's Swamp and various other locations mainly in the flooded areas. Recorded 2 days

American Avocet Recurvirostra americana — Same areas and same two days as the previous species

PLOVERS AND LAPWINGS: Charadriidae

Killdeer Charadrius vociferus— Seen daily around Burns and Malhuer NWR

SANDPIPERS AND ALLIES: Scolopacidae

Long-billed Curlew *Numenius americanus*— Saw or heard them daily the first half of the trip in the fields around Burns and Malhuer. Enjoyed watching a pair dive bombing a raven

Wilson's Snipe *Gallinago delicata*— Good photos of snipe sitting on a fence post on Hotchkiss Lane. Seen or heard on 2 other days at Malhuer

Wilson's Phalarope Phalaropus tricolor— Common in the ponds and flooded fields around Burns and Malhuer

Spotted Sandpiper *Actitis macularius*— Had one at the Burns Fishing Pond and several others around Malhuer. Recorded in the afternoon at Elk Lake on the Cascade Lakes Highway as well.

Willet Tringa semipalmata— Common in the flooded fields and marshy areas during the Malhuer section of the trip

GULLS AND TERNS: Laridae

Franklin's Gull Leucophaeus pipixcan— Good looks our first morning north of Burns and recorded daily in Malhuer.

Ring-billed Gull Larus delawarensis— Small numbers seen daily in Malhuer NWR

California Gull Larus californicus— Only recorded our first morning in a flooded field North of Burns

Black Tern *Chlidonias niger*— Large flock seen on our first day at the Burns Water Treatment Ponds. Saw several others on 2 days in Malhuer NWR

Forster's Tern *Sterna forsteri*— Had several paralleling the road and hovering over the pond in Malhuer. Recorded 2 days there

HERONS AND EGRETS: Ardeidae

American Bittern Botaurus lentiginosus — Saw 1 bird at the Buena Vista Ponds in Malhuer. Was a bit far but were able to watch it through the scope before it disappeared back into the reeds

Great Blue Heron Ardea herodias — Only recorded on our first birding day north of Burns on Foley Road

Great Egret Ardea alba— Seen daily in and around Malhuer including one bird impersonating a swan

Snowy Egret Egretta thula— Only recorded one day at the south end of Malhuer

Black-crowned Night-Heron *Nycticorax nycticorax*— Only recorded one day at Malhuer but at least it was a very photogenic and cooperative bird!

IBIS AND SPOONBILLS: Threskiornithidae

White-faced Ibis Plegadis chihi— Large flocks every day while at Malhuer and in the surrounding areas

NEW WORLD VULTURES: Cathartidae

Turkey Vulture Cathartes aura— Saw small numbers everyday but the hospital/cascade lakes day.

OSPREY: Pandionidae

Osprey Pandion haliaetus— Some people saw one poke its head out of a nest just as we were pulling into Bend, but we had good looks at one the following day at Shevlin Park. We also had one fishing along the Metolius River near Gorge Campground

HAWKS, KITES, AND EAGLES: Accipitridae

Golden Eagle *Aquila chrysaetos*— Very brief views at the overlook at Malhuer but had awesome looks at a pair the following day soaring above the Big Horn Sheep cliff.

Northern Harrier Circus hudsonius — Saw a few pair around Malhuer

Sharp-Shinned Hawk *Accipiter striatus*— Only recorded once at Frenchglen chasing birds and being chased by birds near our hotel. It was only seen by part of the group since it was before our scheduled meeting time.

Cooper's Hawk Accipiter cooperii— Only seen once - a high flyby at Shevlin Park

Bald Eagle *Haliaeetus leucocephalus*— Several seen around Malhuer area. Also had one feeding on a deer carcass just off the highway near Sisters on our last morning

Swainson's Hawk Buteo swainsoni — Several seen around Malhuer area

Red-tailed Hawk *Buteo jamaicensis*— Recorded almost daily throughout the tour including a nest at Malhuer headquarters

Ferruginous Hawk *Buteo regalis*— Awesome views of this beautiful hawk around Malhuer including a nest with chicks not too far from the road

OWLS: Strigidae

Great Horned Owl Bubo virginianus— Great views of 3 different nest sites with chicks observed in the Malhuer area Burrowing Owl Athene cunicularia— One was hunkered down near its nest to stay out of the wind just off the highway heading to Malhuer

KINGFISHERS: Alcedinidae

Belted Kingfisher Megaceryle alcyon— Only saw one day at the pond at Shevlin Park

WOODPECKERS: Picidae

- **Williamson's Sapsucker** *Sphyrapicus thyroideus* Local info came through for us on this one and we got it along the road near Cold Springs Campground. Lucky to get great looks at both the male and female.
- **Red-naped Sapsucker** *Sphyrapicus nuchalis* One was recorded at Malhuer and we had good looks at one using what we dubbed the "bird condominium" at Calliope Crossing. Several others that appeared to be hybrids were seen as well
- **Red-breasted Sapsucker** *Sphyrapicus ruber* Our best one was at Shevlin Park in Bend. Several other candidates were seen, but most appeared to be hybrids with the previous species.
- **Lewis's Woodpecker** *Melanerpes lewis* Awesome views of this beautiful woodpecker nearly daily.
- **Black-backed Woodpecker** *Picoides arcticus* After missing this species in the burn at Trout Creek Swamp, it was one of the highlights of the trip to find one at Whiskey Springs our last evening as time was running out!
- **Downy Woodpecker** *Dryobates pubescens* First seen at Shevlin Park and recorded daily in the Bend/Sisters area **Hairy Woodpecker** *Dryobates villosus* Just like the previous species, we first saw it in Shevlin park and had good looks daily after that.
- White-headed Woodpecker *Dryobates albolarvatus* One of the iconic birds of this tour. We enjoyed our first views at Cold Springs Campground, but perhaps our best view was in the parking lot near the river in Camp Sherman
- **Pileated Woodpecker** *Dryocopus pileatus* Took us 2 tries at Suttle Lake, but we finally got this guy our last morning just before we had to head to the airport!

Northern Flicker Colaptes auratus — Seen nearly every day of the trip

FALCONS AND CARACARAS: Falconidae

American Kestrel Falco sparverius— Had one posing for photos at Malhuer headquarters and then seen daily in that area

Prairie Falcon Falco mexicanus — Amazingly we observed Prairies on every day for the first five days of the tour!

TYRANT FLYCATCHERS: Tyrannidae

Olive-sided Flycatcher *Contopus cooperi*— "quick three beers" call heard around Shevlin Park and Cold Springs and seen by a couple of people here. Finally able to get one in the scope for everyone at Whispering Pines.

Western Wood-Pewee Contopus sordidulus— One of the few species recorded nearly every day of the trip

Willow Flycatcher Empidonax traillii — Recorded only once during the tour at the Benson Bond at Malhuer

Hammond's Flycatcher *Empidonax hammondii*— We called one in after our picnic lunch at cold springs and saw several others over the next couple of days

- **Gray Flycatcher** *Empidonax wrightii* First seen at the Sage Hen Rest Area, then several more in the dry sage and juniper habitat around Malhuer
- **Dusky Flycatcher** *Empidonax oberholseri* One recorded early in the trip at Malhuer headquarters and a couple more around Sisters.
- **Pacific-slope Flycatcher** *Empidonax difficilis* Heard several and saw a couple of time at Whitpering Pines Campground and on our walk along Trout Creek Swamp
- **Say's Phoebe** Sayornis saya— One of the first birds we saw on the trip—one had a nest at the Sage Hen Rest area. Another nest at the hotel in Frenchglen.
- **Ash-throated Flycatcher** *Myiarchus cinerascens* Called in a bird at Page Springs Campground. Also saw it at Benson Pond the following day

Western Kingbird *Tyrannus verticalis*— Not very common but we normally we saw a few from the van, then we also had one on the telephone wires during out lunch stop at the Narrows.

Eastern Kingbird Tyrannus tyrannus— Seen a couple of different times around Benson Pond and Malhuer

VIREOS: Vireonidae

Cassin's Vireo *Vireo cassinii*— First seen on hour hike along Jack Creek, but our best looks were at Gorge Campground near Camp Sherman where we had awesome looks at one in the willows at eye level

Warbling Vireo Vireo gilvus— Recorded only once in the aspen at Shevlin Park

SHRIKES: Laniidae

Loggerhead Shrike *Lanius Iudovicianus*— Brief views at Ruh-Red Road, then 2 pair seen and heard by all that same day while looking for Sagebrush Sparrow near the Narrows

CROWS AND JAYS: Corvidae

Pinyon Jay *Gymnorhinus cyanocephalus*— Steve located 2 birds near the high school in Sisters and tied them down (lol) until we got there.

Stellar's Jay Cyanocitta stelleri— Common in the Bend/Sisters portion of the trip

California Scrub-Jay Aphelocoma californica— Only seen by a couple of us just outside of our hotel in Bend

Black-billed Magpie Pica hudsonia— Common in the areas around Malhuer

American Crow *Corvus brachyrhynchos*— Seems like we didn't see them very often but ended up recording them on 5 separate days. There were a few that were always around Frenchglen

Common Raven Corvus corax— Common and seen daily

TITS AND CHICKADEES: Paridae

Mountain Chickadee Poecile gambeli— Seen daily once we left Malhuer and got to the mountains

LARKS: Alaudidae

Horned Lark Eremophila alpestris — One at the feeder at our first stop of the trip at the Brothers Rest Area

SWALLOWS AND MARTINS: Hirundinidae

Northern Rough-winged Swallow *Stelgidopteryx serripennis*— Didn't see a ton of them but had a few on 4 days of the trip, mostly around the Malhuer area

Tree Swallow *Tachycineta bicolor*— Most common swallow of the trip and seen most days

Violet-green Swallow *Tachycineta thalassina*— First seen at the Horse Ridge Canyon Viewpoint, then seen a few other days in the Burns/Sisters area

Bank Swallow Riparia riparia — Only seen at the Burns Fishing Ponds on our first full day of birding

Barn Swallow Hirundo rustica — Common in the Malhuer region

Cliff Swallow Petrochelidon pyrrhonota— Common in the Malhuer region

LONG-TAILED TITS: Aegithalidae

Bushtit Psaltriparus minimus— a small group of was present at Page Springs Campground

KINGLETS: Regulidae

Golden-crowned Kinglet *Regulus satrapa*— Seen and heard a couple times on the hike at Trout Creek Swamp **Ruby-crowned Kinglet** *Regulus calendula*— Only recorded at Benson Pond at Malhuer

NUTHATCHES: Sittidae

Red-breasted Nuthatch Sitta canadensis— Common and seen daily in the pine forests around Bend/Sisters

White-breasted Nuthatch Sitta carolinensis— Not seen as often as the other two nuthatch species, but still seen multiple times in the Bend/Sisters portion of the trip. One of the species nesting in the "bird condo" at Calliope Crossing

Pygmy Nuthatch Sitta pygmaea — Common and seen daily in the pine forests around Bend/Sisters

CREEPERS: Certhiidae

Brown Creeper Certhia americana— Heard but unable to locate on our hike at Jack Creek

GNATCATCHERS: Polioptilidae

Blue-gray Gnatcatcher Polioptila caerulea— Recorded on 2 days behind the hotel in Frenchglen

WRENS: Troglodytidae

Rock Wren Salpinctes obsoletus— Recorded several times in the cliffs and rocky areas in the Malhuer area

Canyon Wren Catherpes mexicanus— Heard on the cliff above Page Springs Campground, then called across the canyon at Horse Ridge Overlook and eventually popped up on our side of the canyon giving us great looks a few feet away.

Bewick's Wren Thryomanes bewickii — Seen by part of the group along East Canal Road

DIPPERS: Cinclidae

American Dipper Cinclus mexicanus — Spotted just off the bridge at Jack Creek (probably nesting under the bridge

STARLINGS AND MYNAS: Sturnidae

European Starling Sturnus vulgaris— Recorded almost daily

MOCKINGBIRDS AND THRASHERS: Mimidae

Sage Thrasher Oreoscoptes montanus— Several seen along Ruh-Rush Road

THRUSHES: Turdidae

Western Bluebird Sialia mexicana— Hanging around the parking lot of the Best Western in Sisters

Mountain Bluebird *Sialia currucoides*— Recorded our first day at Sage Hen Rest Area and then seen a few other times during the tour

Townsend's Solitaire Myadestes townsendi— Heard at Sage Hen Rest Area, then later seen at Cold Springs

Hermit Thrush Catharus guttatus— Heard at Whispering Pines Campground

American Robin Turdus migratorius— Seen daily

WAXWINGS: Bombycillidae

Cedar Waxwing Bombycilla cedrorum — Several flocks at Sage Hen Rest Area and seen daily around Malhuer

OLD WORLD SPARROWS: Passeridae

House Sparrow Passer domesticus— Common around towns. Seen daily

FINCHES: Fringillidae

Evening Grosbeak *Coccothraustes vespertinus*— This was the reward for those of us that did the optional early morning birding at Calliope Crossing. Had both male and female

House Finch *Haemorhous mexicanus*— Only recorded on 2 days during the trip – First at Sage Hen Rest area then again at the feeders at the Narrows

Purple Finch Haemorhous purpureus— Recorded on our hike along Jack Creek

Cassin's Finch *Haemorhous cassinii*— Only seen on our first day. Perched in a Juniper in the cold and wind at the Sage Hen Rest Area

Red Crossbill Loxia curvirostra— Great views of this unique species as they were coming to drink from the creek at Cold Springs. Common and seen daily around Bend and Sisters

Pine Siskin Spinus pinus — First seen at Malhuer Headquarters, then recorded on a few other days as well

Lesser Goldfinch Spinus psaltria— Recorded three days, mainly around Frenchglen

American Goldfinch *Spinus tristis*— Several large flocks around Malhuer Headquarters. Recorded 2 other days around Malhuer

NEW WORLD SPARROWS: Passerellidae

Chipping Sparrow Spizella passerina— Recorded most days of the tour

Brewer's Sparrow *Spizella breweri*— First at Sage Hen Rest Area and then had a couple more singing from the tops of sage brush along Ruh-Rush Road

Lark Sparrow Chondestes grammacus— Great looks at a couple in Page Springs Campground and also recorded near Frenchglen

Fox Sparrow *Passerella iliaca*— Recorded nearly daily around sisters starting with a beautiful singing male in Cold Springs Campground.

Dark-eyed Junco Junco hyemalis — Aptly named Oregon race of the juncos were seen daily around Bend/Sisters

Sagebrush Sparrow *Artemisiospiza nevadensis*— Took a bit of work but eventually located a beautiful singing bird on the road west of the Narrows

Savannah Sparrow Passerculus sandwichensis — Only recorded twice during the tour around Burns

Song Sparrow Melospiza melodia — Most common sparrow of the trip and seen daily

Green-tailed Towhee *Pipilo chlorurus*— Only seen by a couple of us during an optional pre-breakfast walk at Frenchglen **Spotted Towhee** *Pipilo maculatus*— One was seen just after our picnic at Cold Springs

YELLOW-BREASTED CHAT: Icteriidae

Yellow-breasted Chat *Icteria virens*— Seen around Frenchglen but had better looks at Pine Springs Campground – there were several in the thick vegetation along the creek

NEW WORLD BLACKBIRDS: Icteridae

Yellow-headed Blackbird *Xanthocephalus* — Seen daily around Malhuer area. Most memorable were the dozens of birds that were at the bird feeders at the headquarters

Bobolink Dolichonyx oryzivorus— We saw several individuals as we birded along the Central Patrol Road at Malhuer

Western Meadowlark Sturnella neglecta— Daily in the Malhuer area

Bullock's Oriole Icterus bullockii — Daily in the Malhuer/Frenchglen area

Red-winged Blackbird Agelaius phoeniceus— Common and seen every day of the trip

Brown-headed Cowbird *Molothrus ater*— Common and seen every day of the trip

Brewer's Blackbird Euphagus cyanocephalus— Common and seen every day of the trip

NEW WORLD WARBLERS: Parulidae

Orange-crowned Warbler Leiothlypis celata — Only recorded once during the trip at Benson Pond

Nashville Warbler Leiothlypis ruficapilla — Great looks at this one near the bridge at Jack Creek

MacGillivray's Warbler *Geothlypis tolmiei*— We worked pretty hard for one a Shevlin Park, but once we had one then we got them every day for the rest of the trip

Common Yellowthroat *Geothlypis trichas*— Seen/heard nearly daily

Yellow Warbler Setophaga petechia— Recorded every day of the tour

Yellow-rumped Warbler *Setophaga coronata*— Another one of our everyday birds but always fun to see, especially fun for those from the east to see the Audubon's type here in the west

Black-throated Gray Warbler Setophaga nigrescens— Great looks of this beautiful warbler at Page Springs

Townsend's Warbler *Setophaga townsendi*— A couple of migrants around Malhuer (one a headquarters and a couple at the bighorn sheep spot), then breeders later around Sisters

Hermit Warbler *Setophaga occidentalis*— can be tricky around Sisters since they frequently hybridize with the previous species. We saw both birds that looked like hybrids and birds that looked like pure Hermits (included the one we called in at Jack Creek)

Wilson's Warbler *Cardellina pusilla*— Surprisingly seen daily during the trip in all kinds of random places. It appeared that they were migrating later than normal this year

CARDINALS, GROSBEAKS, AND ALLIES: Cardinalidae

Western Tanager Piranga ludoviciana— Low numbers seen nearly every day of the trip

Black-headed Grosbeak Pheucticus melanocephalus— Recorded every day of the tour

Lazuli Bunting Passerina amoena— Always a crowd-pleaser, we saw this species daily around Malhuer

MAMMALS:

Western Gray Squirrel Sciurus griseus— Commonly seen around during the Sierra portion of the trip Douglas's Squirrel Tamiasciurus douglasii— Commonly seen during the Sierra portion of the trip Yellow-bellied Marmot Marmota flaviventris— Several seen in the rocky hills around Malhue Belding's Ground Squirrel Spermophilus beldingi— Common around Malhuer area Golden-mantled Ground Squirrel Spermophilus lateralis— Common around Malhuer area Yellow-pine Chipmunk Neotamias amoenus— Common in the Sierra pine areas

Least Chipmunk Neotamias minimus— Common around the foothills around Malhuer

Nuttall's Cottontail Sylvilagus nuttallii — Commonly seen around Malhuer and Frenchglen

Coyote Canis latrans— Seen a couple of times around Malhuer

Mule Deer Odocoileus hermionus — Regularly observed in the Malhuer region

Pronghorn *Antilocapra americana*— Seen in the open areas on the drive from Redmond/Bend area to Malheur **Muskrat** *Ondatra zibethicus*— A couple seen in the marshes at Malhuer NWR

Bobcat *Lynx rufus*— One of the craziest sightings of the tour. One was on a telephone pole along the road through Malhuer to Frenchglen

Bighorn Sheep Ovis canadensis— Enjoyed watching several bunches of ewes and lambs and another bunch of large Rams on the cliffs a short drive from Frenchglen

Wild Horses (Feral) Equus ferus— a large herd hanging out in the mountains above Frenchglen

Gray Fox Urocyon cinereogrameus— Observed running across a frozen lake on the Cascade Lakes Scenic Byway

REPTILES AND AMPHIBIANS:

Western Fence Lizard Sceloporus occidentalis Western Terrestrial Garter Snake Thamnophis elegans Gopher Snake Pituophis catenifer