

Birding Canyon Country | Species List

September 16 – 24, 2023 | with Naturalist Journeys



With guide **Dave Mehlman** and participants: **Ann, Karen, Lynette, Marcia, Marie, Maura, Mike, and Steve**

Compiled by Dave Mehlman

(H) = Heard only

(G) = Found by guide only

(I) = Introduced

eBird trip report: [Naturalist Journeys Utah Parks & Birding, September 2023 - eBird Trip Report](#)

BIRDS (98 species recorded, of which 1 was heard only and 2 were seen by the guide only):

DUCKS, GEESE AND SWANS: Anatidae (8)

Canada Goose *Branta canadensis*—Recorded 3 times on the tour at Tonaquint Park, Jackson Flat Reservoir, and Ruby's Inn lake

Mute Swan *Cygnus olor*—(I) A group of these were on a golf course as we drove by them when leaving Tonaquint Park

Wood Duck *Aix sponsa*—One male seen in the pond at Tonaquint Park

American Wigeon *Mareca americana*—A few seen with the scope in Pine Lake

Mallard *Anas platyrhynchos*—By far the most widespread duck seen on the tour, these were reported on 5 days at most sites with appropriate bodies of water

Common Merganser *Mergus merganser*—Seen flying over the Virgin River in Zion

Red-breasted Merganser *Mergus serrator*—One seen in the lake behind Ruby's Inn, Bryce Canyon City

Ruddy Duck *Oxyura jamaicensis*—Found at Jackson Flat Reservoir, the pond by Ruby's Inn, and at Pine Lake

PARTRIDGES, PHEASANTS AND ALLIES: Phasianidae (1)

Wild Turkey *Meleagris gallopavo*—Seen on two days when in Zion

GREBES: Podicipedidae (2)

Pied-billed Grebe *Podilymbus podiceps*—Found at Jackson Flat Reservoir, the lake behind Ruby's Inn, and the Boulder Mountain Lodge pond

Western Grebe *Aechmophorus occidentalis*—A pair seen with the scope at Jackson Flat Reservoir

PIGEONS AND DOVES: Columbidae (3)

Rock Pigeon *Columba livia*—(I) Seen in St. George when we returned there at the end of the tour

Eurasian Collared-Dove *Streptopelia decaocto*—(I) Regularly seen on the tour when in or passing through towns

Mourning Dove *Zenaida macroura*—Found at Tonaquint Park, in Fredonia, and along the road on the last day

CUCKOOS AND ALLIES: Cuculidae (1)

Greater Roadrunner *Geococcyx californianus*—One glimpsed running away at Tonaquint Park

SWIFTS: Apodidae (1)

White-throated Swift *Aeronautes saxatalis*—Seen by a few in the group in Zion Canyon

HUMMINGBIRDS: Trochilidae (1)

Black-chinned Hummingbird *Archilochus alexandri*—One perched nicely for us in some vegetation before the second dinner at Bit & Spur, Springdale; we possibly saw another very briefly at the Calf Creek Falls feeders

RAILS, COOTS AND ALLIES: Rallidae (1)

American Coot *Fulica americana*—Widespread and found in almost all appropriate wetlands visited on the tour

CRANES: Gruidae (1)

Sandhill Crane *Antigone canadensis*—A small flock seen by the road while driving from Torrey to St. George on the last day

SANDPIPERS AND ALLIES: Scolopacidae (1)

Spotted Sandpiper *Actitis macularius*—Several seen on the shores of Pine Lake

HERONS AND EGRETS: Ardeidae (2)

Great Blue Heron *Ardea herodias*—One seen in the Virgin River in Zion and another was at Jackson Flat Reservoir

Green Heron *Butorides virescens*—One seen in the pond at Tonaquint Park

IBIS AND SPOONBILLS: Threskiornithidae (1)

White-faced Ibis *Plegadis chihi*—A small flock seen at Jackson Flat Reservoir

NEW WORLD VULTURES: Cathartidae (2)

California Condor *Gymnogyps californianus*—Probably the best bird species and most stunning sighting of the tour, we found six of these at Navajo Bridge, with some sitting on either the old or new bridge, others soaring overhead, and others flying in to perch, presumably for the evening. Of the six birds, we were able to read wing tags on five (info from www.condorspotter.com):

- R8: male; age 8 years, 4 months; hatched April 29, 2015 at Oregon Zoo
- 54: male, age 19 years, 3 months; hatched June 13, 2004 at World Center for Birds of Prey
- 8Y: male, age 4 years, 5 months; hatched April 21, 2019 at World Center for Birds of Prey
- -Y: female, age 4 years, 5 months; hatched March 28, 2019 at Oregon Zoo
- L4: female, age 12 years, 3 months; hatched May 27, 2011 in the wild

Turkey Vulture *Cathartes aura*—Seen on every day of the tour at almost all sites visited, including many days while driving

OSPREY: Pandionidae (1)

Osprey *Pandion haliaetus*—One appeared, as if by magic, at Jackson Flat Reservoir as we were leaving; big thanks to Maura for spotting that one!

HAWKS, KITES, AND EAGLES: Accipitridae (5)

Golden Eagle *Aquila chrysaetos*—We had a beautiful view of an adult soaring by Farview Point in Bryce Canyon while being harassed by a Red-tailed Hawk

Northern Harrier *Circus hudsonius*—One flew over Jackson Flat Reservoir

Sharp-shinned Hawk *Accipiter striatus*—Seen flying by the North Rim, Grand Canyon NP

Cooper's Hawk *Accipiter cooperii*—Recorded on 3 days at Tonaquint Park, Jackson Flat Reservoir, and Farview Point in Bryce Canyon

Red-tailed Hawk *Buteo jamaicensis*—The most commonly encountered raptor of the tour, we found these on 4 days at numerous sites, sometimes while driving

WOODPECKERS: Picidae (4)

Red-naped Sapsucker *Sphyrapicus nuchalis*—Found twice during the tour, first at Tonaquint Park on the first day and again during our last walk at Capitol Reef Resort

Lewis's Woodpecker *Melanerpes lewis*—One of the highlights of the tour, two of these were seen in an enormous dead Ponderosa Pine right off highway Utah 12 just outside of Boulder

Hairy Woodpecker *Dryobates villosus*—One seen during our stop at Lafevre Overlook off highway US 89A

Northern Flicker *Colaptes auratus*—Recorded on 5 days at Grafton, Bryce Canyon, the Boulder Ponderosa Pine, and Capitol Reef Resort

FALCONS AND CARACARAS: Falconidae (3)

American Kestrel *Falco sparverius*—Seen once at Grand Canyon North Rim, once at Bryce Canyon, and along the road while driving back from Pine Lake to Bryce Canyon

Peregrine Falcon *Falco peregrinus*—One flew by some in the group one morning while on the North Rim Lodge patio

Prairie Falcon *Falco mexicanus*—One dramatically flew over us at Fairyland Canyon in Bryce Canyon NP

TYRANT FLYCATCHERS: Tyrannidae (7)

Hammond's Flycatcher *Empidonax hammondii*—One seen during our morning walk around the parking area on the North Rim

Black Phoebe *Sayornis nigricans*—One found at Tonaquint Park

Say's Phoebe *Sayornis saya*—Seen at Tonaquint Park, Grafton, and the Condor Viewing Site

Western Kingbird *Tyrannus verticalis*—A couple of these were hanging out on fence posts near the Condor Viewing Site

VIREOS: Vireonidae (1)

Warbling Vireo *Vireo gilvus*—Seen in the mixed-species flock at Tonaquint Park and heard at Zion

CROWS AND JAYS: Corvidae (7)

Pinyon Jay *Gymnorhinus cyanocephalus*—Small flock of about 6 birds seen flying along the road when we drove into Torrey from Capitol Reef Resort before heading to Capitol Reef NP

Steller's Jay *Cyanocitta stelleri*—Seen in Zion at Big Bend and on the Emerald Pool hike and on most days at Grand Canyon North Rim and Bryce Canyon

Woodhouse's Scrub-Jay *Aphelocoma woodhouseii*—Found on 5 days at multiple sites, including at Zion, Grand Canyon, Bryce Canyon, and Calf Creek Falls

Black-billed Magpie *Pica hudsonia*—Seen at Boulder Mountain Lodge and when leaving Torrey on the last day

Clark's Nutcracker *Nucifraga columbiana*—This characteristic species of high elevation pine forests was seen on 4 days at Grand Canyon and Bryce Canyon, sometimes flying overhead

American Crow *Corvus brachyrhynchos*—Only reported on the day we left Zion

Common Raven *Corvus corax*—Found on every day of the tour at almost all sites; a regularly encountered presence in the mountains and valleys of southwest Utah

TITS AND CHICKADEES: Paridae (2)

Mountain Chickadee *Poecile gambeli*—Found at Bryce Canyon while at Rainbow/Yovimpa Point

Juniper Titmouse *Baeolophus ridgwayi*—One seen in the junipers by the side of the road on US highway 89A as we stopped to admire the view of the Vermilion Cliffs

PENDULINE TITS: Remizidae (1)

Verdin *Auriparus flaviceps*—Found at Tonaquint Park

BUSHTITS: Aegithalidae (1)

Bushtit *Psaltriparus minimus*—A small group of these were foraging in the pinyons at our picnic site at Cape Royal, North Rim

SWALLOWS AND MARTINS: Hirundinidae (3)

Bank Swallow *Riparia riparia*—Several picked out of the large flock of swallows over Jackson Flat Reservoir

Barn Swallow *Hirundo rustica*—Most common swallow in the large flock of swallows over Jackson Flat Reservoir

Cliff Swallow *Petrochelidon pyrrhonota*—Several picked out of the large flock of swallows over Jackson Flat Reservoir

NUTHATCHES: Sittidae (3)

Red-breasted Nuthatch *Sitta canadensis*—Found on 4 days at Zion, the North Rim, and Bryce Canyon

White-breasted Nuthatch *Sitta carolinensis*—Found at Jacob Lake Inn and on all 3 days at Bryce Canyon

Pygmy Nuthatch *Sitta pygmaea*—This Ponderosa Pine associated species was found on 4 days at the North Rim, Bryce Canyon, and at the dead Ponderosa Pine outside Boulder

WRENS: Troglodytidae (3)

Canyon Wren *Catherpes mexicanus*—(H) One heard on the Middle Emerald Pool trail in Zion

House Wren *Troglodytes aedon*—One seen skulking around the fountain at Jacob Lake Inn

Marsh Wren *Cistothorus palustris*—Single bird seen in the cattails at Tonaquint Park, but it refused to respond to playback

DIPPERS: Cinclidae (1)

American Dipper *Cinclus mexicanus*—One bird flew rapidly down the Virgin River when we were at the end of the Riverside Walk

STARLINGS: Sturnidae (1)

European Starling *Sturnus vulgaris*—(I) Seen perching on wires in several towns along the way as we drove back from Torrey to St. George

THRUSHES: Turdidae (5)

Western Bluebird *Sialia mexicana*—Found on 3 days of the tour in Zion on the east entrance road, Jacob Lake Inn, and in Bryce Canyon

Mountain Bluebird *Sialia currucoides*—Seen perching on roadside fences along the Johns Valley Road as we drove back to Bryce Canyon from Pine Lake

Townsend's Solitaire *Myadestes townsendi*—Seen a couple of times during our full day at Bryce Canyon

Swainson's Thrush *Catharus swainsoni*—One seen on our walk at Grand Canyon North Rim, around the parking lot and cabins

American Robin *Turdus migratorius*—Found on 3 days at Tonaquint Park, Grand Canyon North Rim, and Capitol Reef Resort

OLD WORLD SPARROWS: Passeridae (1)

House Sparrow *Passer domesticus*—(I) Recorded on four days in Escalante and Torrey

FINCHES: Fringillidae (5)

House Finch *Haemorhous mexicanus*—Normally a common bird, but we only recorded this on two days at Tonaquint Park and Calf Creek Falls

Cassin's Finch *Haemorhous cassinii*—Found twice, first at the Jacob Lake Inn fountain and again in the big, dead, Ponderosa Pine just outside of Boulder

Red Crossbill *Loxia curvirostra*—We had great looks at quite a few of these at Jacob Lake Inn and saw them again at Bryce Canyon

Pine Siskin *Spinus pinus*—Seen on 3 days at Grand Canyon North Rim, Jacob Lake Inn, and at the Boulder Ponderosa Pine
Lesser Goldfinch *Spinus psaltria*—Recorded on 3 days at Tonaquint Park, Jacob Lake Inn, and Calf Creek Falls

NEW WORLD SPARROWS: Passerellidae (7)

Chipping Sparrow *Spizella passerina*—One seen by Dave at the Condor Viewing Site and seen by the whole group at Jacob Lake Inn by the water feature

Dark-eyed Junco *Junco hyemalis*—Seen at the North Rim and Jacob Lake Inn; all were of the locally breeding Gray-headed form

White-crowned Sparrow *Zonotrichia leucophrys*—Very common in the Russian Olives near the llama pen at Capitol Reef Resort

Vesper Sparrow *Pooecetes gramineus*—One sat on the edge of the road as we left the Condor Viewing Site

Song Sparrow *Melospiza melodia*—A single bird very cooperatively sat on the ground at Tonaquint Park

Abert's Towhee *Melospiza aberti*—Several hopping around on the ground at Tonaquint Park on the first day

Spotted Towhee *Pipilo maculatus*—(G) One seen by Dave skulking in the Gambel's Oaks at Calf Creek Falls

NEW WORLD BLACKBIRDS: Icteridae (3)

Red-winged Blackbird *Agelaius phoeniceus*—Seen on the final day alongside the road when driving from Torrey to St. George

Brewer's Blackbird *Euphagus cyanocephalus*—Found two days in a row, first at Jacob Lake Inn and at the ponds by Ruby's Inn

Great-tailed Grackle *Quiscalus mexicanus*—Seen in St. George and again, at a considerably higher elevation than normal, at Cape Royal on the North Rim

NEW WORLD WARBLERS: Parulidae (9)

Orange-crowned Warbler *Leiothlypis celata*—(G) Found by Dave at both Tonaquint Park and Capitol Reef Resort

Nashville Warbler *Leiothlypis ruficapilla*—One seen in the trees at Tonaquint Park, part of a feeding flock

Virginia's Warbler *Leiothlypis virginiae*—Great views of this one at Tonaquint Park when it foraged very low in some rabbitbrush

MacGillivray's Warbler *Geothlypis tolmiei*—Seen by some in the group at the Jacob Lake Inn fountain

Common Yellowthroat *Geothlypis trichas*—Found by a few in the group one morning at Capitol Reef Resort

Townsend's Warbler *Setophaga townsendi*—One seen after lunch at Cape Royal, Grand Canyon North Rim, in the pinyons

Yellow Warbler *Setophaga petechia*—One in a mixed-species flock at Tonaquint Park

Yellow-rumped Warbler *Setophaga coronata*—Although the most common warbler seen, we only recorded these on 3 days at Jacob Lake Inn and Capitol Reef Resort; all appeared to be of the Audubon's form

Wilson's Warbler *Cardellina pusilla*—Only seen twice, first at Tonaquint Park and again at the roadside stop on US highway 89A overlooking the Vermilion Cliffs

MAMMALS (10 species recorded):

Bighorn Sheep *Ovis canadensis*—Seen by some in the group from the park shuttle in Zion

Mule Deer *Odocoileus hemionus*—A very commonly observed mammal, we recorded these on 6 days of the tour at many sites, most notably in Zion and during the night-time drive from Jacob Lake to the North Rim

Coyote *Canis latrans*—One ran across the highway during our drive from Torrey to St. George on the last day

Desert Cottontail *Sylvilagus audubonii*—Seen at Tonaquint Park on the first day

Utah Prairie Dog *Cynomys parvidens*—Seen on 2 days at Bryce Canyon

White-tailed Antelope Squirrel *Amмосpermophilus leucurus*—Seen at Tonaquint Park, where many were running around with their tails in the air

Golden-mantled Ground Squirrel *Callospermophilus lateralis*—Found at Bryce Canyon

Rock Squirrel *Otospermophilus variegatus*—A common and widespread species, often heard

Uinta Chipmunk *Neotamias umbrinus*—Seen on all days in Bryce Canyon NP

Hopi Chipmunk *Neotamias rufus*—Several at Calf Creek Falls

REPTILES AND AMPHIBIANS (2 species recorded):

Ornate Tree Lizard *Urosaurus ornatus*—One seen on a building wall at Tonaquint Park

Red-eared Slider *Trachemys scripta*—Large numbers of these were in the pond at Tonaquint Park, watching us very closely; it is likely they have been introduced there

BUTTERFLIES AND MOTHS (2 species recorded):

Arizona Sister *Adelpha eulalia*—Seen a couple of times during the tour in Zion

White-lined Sphinx *Hyles lineata*—Amazing observation of one of these feeding on Rubber Rabbitbrush by the Gifford House, Capitol Reef

LOCATIONS AND NOTES:

Day 1: Saturday, September 16, 2023: St. George (Tonaquint Park, Confluence Park), Grafton, Springdale

Day 2: Sunday, September 17, 2023: Springdale, Zion National Park (Lower Emerald Pool trail, Riverside Trail, Big Bend, Visitor Center)

Day 3: Monday, September 18, 2023: Springdale, Zion East Entrance, Checkerboard Mesa, Jackson Flat Reservoir,

Day 4: Tuesday, September 19, 2023: Grand Canyon National Park (North Rim,)

Day 5: Wednesday, September 20, 2023: Kanab; Red Canyon Visitor Center, Dixie National Forest; Ruby's Inn ponds; Bryce Canyon Lodge

Day 6: Thursday, September 21, 2023: Bryce Canyon National Park

Day 7: Friday, September 22, 2023: Ruby's Inn ponds; Mossy Cave Trail (Bryce Canyon NP)); Escalante; Escalante River trailhead; Calf Creek Recreation Area; Boulder Mountain Lodge pond; Boulder Mountain; Capitol Reef Resort, Torrey

Day 8: Saturday, September 23, 2023: Capitol Reef Resort, Capitol Reef National Park

Day 9: Sunday, September 24, 2023: Capitol Reef Resort, drive to St. George