



Colorado: Prairie Chickens, Grouse & More

April 4th - 14th, 2019

Trip Report and Photos: Stephan Lorenz



White-tailed Ptarmigan was again voted bird of the trip, not surprisingly given the views we had of a pair up on Loveland Pass Photo
Stephan Lorenz

This was one of the most successful Colorado Tours to date, an incredible 2600 mile adventure that criss-crossed one of the most beautiful states. The tour was filled to the brim with rare birds, especially grouse and quail of course, many mammals, nearly thirty species, and unforgettable scenery. We visited the prairies of Kansas, drove into to the high Rockies, explored gorges and canyons, headed to the high sagebrush steppe of western Colorado, and even including a short side excursion to the Colorado-Utah border to nab a few specialties. Overall, the tour was a complete success with all native grouse and quail species seen extremely well, some down to a few meters as they performed their distinctive booming and dances. The photographic opportunities were outstanding and even the endangered and declining Gunnison Sage-Grouse was seen well this year. It was also the only tour in recent memory that found all possible winter finches, including the nomadic Evening Grosbeak, unpredictable Pine Grosbeak, Red Crossbill, Cassin's Finch, and of course the star attractions, all three species of rosy-finches. Other Rocky Mountain specialties included American Three-toed and Lewis's Woodpeckers, Williamson's Sapsucker, the tricky Pinyon Jay, newly split Woodhouse's Scrub-Jay, and more. The vast grasslands of the eastern plains offered a pair of difficult Mountain Plovers and the duo of longspurs with both McCown's and Chestnut-collared seen very well. On the sagebrush steppe, we found the locally rare Sagebrush Sparrow, Sage Thrasher, and we located Juniper Titmouse and Prairie Falcon. Surprises included Gray Flycatcher and Brewer's Sparrow, both early arrivals. Overall, we recorded 143 bird species, quite a feat given that a storm system moved through the state dumping large amounts of snow, making some areas tricky, but fortunately we avoided the worst of the weather and were able to visit all sites right on schedule. The headliners among the two dozen mammal species were American Badger and American Marten, but Moose, Bighorn Sheep, three species of prairie dogs were also welcome.



Lesser Prairie-Chickens were booming in Kansas Photo Stephan Lorenz

April 4th, 2019

We all met in the late afternoon in the Denver Airport and after loading two vans had an uneventful drive to Pueblo. Here we had dinner, talked about the plans for the following ten days, and then retired for the night with high anticipation for the first birding day.



Curve-billed Thrashers showed nicely outside of Pueblo Photo Stephan Lorenz

April 5th, 2019

After an early breakfast, we reached the first birding destination of the tour right at dawn. Just west of Pueblo, we scanned the open grasslands on the edge of a neighborhood with the grandiose Rocky Mountains looming on the horizon. We quickly noted the first Say's Phoebes and Loggerhead Shrikes of the trip, both species duly observed in the scope. Soon thereafter, we heard our first "chicken" of the tour when a Scaled Quail called in the distance and it took only a few moments before we spotted the first. We then wandered down the road a bit and among the open yards found more Scaled Quails and confiding Curve-billed Thrashers. Another excellent find was a single Canyon Towhee, our only chance for the species, and it perched still on a shed in the frigid morning air. Among raptors, we noted the first Northern Harrier, Red-tailed Hawk, and American Kestrel and all three species would be common throughout the trip. We then headed east towards Kansas with several excellent birding stops along the way. Our next stop was at a reservoir east of Pueblo and, despite low water levels, we

racked up more than forty species in just an hour's worth of birding. Here, we scoped several species of waterfowl, including Canada Goose, Blue-winged Teal, Cinnamon Teal, Northern Shoveler, Gadwall, American Wigeon, Mallard, Northern Pintail, Green-winged Teal, Canvasback, Lesser Scaup, Bufflehead, Red-breasted Merganser, and hundreds of Ruddy Ducks. The main targets here were grebes and we quickly found two close Clark's Grebes, numerous distant Western Grebes, and Eared Grebes as a bonus. The muddy margins of the lake held some shorebirds with Black-necked Stilt, American Avocet, Killdeer, and Greater Yellowlegs all seen well. Gulls were also moving through and we could compare the small Bonaparte's Gull with the pink hued Franklin's Gulls, with a Ring-billed Gull thrown in for diversity. We then headed into drier short grass prairies and had the first vistas of the endless plains of eastern Colorado. We drove along remote dirt tracks near Blue Mesa Reservoir were hundreds of Horned Larks and dozens of Western Meadowlarks were present. Distant American White Pelicans soaring above the horizon were an odd site, but two bonus Vesper Sparrows were right outside the vehicles. We also tallied an incredible twelve Burrowing Owls that yipped at us from their dirt mounds and burst into short flights. A dedicated search soon turned up a pair of Chihuahuan Ravens that eventually showed very well in the scope, this is a rare species in Colorado and always a welcome addition. A Golden Eagle perched in the distance was difficult to discern in the heat haze and we would get better views later. It was then off to Kansas and we still had some distance to cover, but a superb Rough-legged Hawk along the way had us stopping really quick for excellent views. In Kansas we had dinner at a locally famous eatery before getting some rest in preparation for an early start and our first lek visit the following day.



Greater Prairie Chickens didn't disappoint at their lek Photo Stephan Lorenz

April 6th, 2019

It turned out to be an early but spectacular morning. As we were driving out to the location in the dark an American Badger crossed the road in front of us, an excellent sighting. We visited a private ranch and divided into three blinds, all enjoying the spectacle of Lesser Prairie-Chickens booming and displaying. Some individuals came within five meters and we could truly study one of North America's rarest displays. This particular lek is especially interesting since it is a mixed species lek and several Greater Prairie-Chickens were also displaying nearby, allowing for a direct comparison between these two closely related and similar species. Two prairie-chickens in one morning, wow, our tour was off to an excellent start. A single Ferruginous Hawk made a distant flyby and another Burrowing Owl was seen before we left the ranch to head northwest, back into Colorado, but we certainly enjoyed our brief stint in Kansas. We detoured back west for a very special bird and indeed our classic location produced again with a pair of Mountain Plovers in a huge plowed field. After locating these cryptic birds, we were able to enjoy scope views for as long as we wanted. Then we scoured the flocks of longspurs and everyone eventually enjoyed good on the ground views of McCown's Longspur, but the Chestnut-collared would have to wait until tomorrow. We then drove north to Wray through very scenic prairie cut by deep canyons and at the last moment, just before we reached town, picked up Wild Turkey. We met our local rancher to set up plans for the lek visit the following day and then enjoyed a delicious dinner in town.



Black Rosy-Finches were almost common this year Photo Stephan Lorenz

April 7th, 2019



Sharp-tailed Grouse near Craig Photo Stephan Lorenz

The morning dawned cool and clear and we drove to the lek site in high anticipation. Arriving at the spot, several Greater Prairie-Chickens were already booming and after we had parked more and more flew in. This is one of the finest leks during the tour and we were literally surrounded by prairie-chickens stomping their feet, prancing back and forth, engaging in duels, and chasing after females. In total, at least thirty-five birds were present. Eventually, we had to tear ourselves away since we were headed for the Rockies with several stops along the way. On the way out we found a surprise flock of McCown's Longspurs and after a dedicated search were able to flush a pair of Northern Bobwhites for everyone to see, keeping us on track for a clean chicken run. We also found the only Brown-headed Cowbird of the trip and had good views of White-crowned Sparrows, while the introduced Ring-necked Pheasant was added. We returned to the hotel and packed up after breakfast. Driving back west, we reached our Chestnut-collared Longspur spot before noon, but some drilling development nearby had impacted the area and things didn't look promising. We persisted and eventually three distant birds were spotted. After patiently waiting, one male came very close, eventually perching right in front of us for unbeatable views, a very attractive longspur. We then continued to Pawnee National Grasslands and due to the remote location were only able to find lunch in a small store set among a cluster of houses that one may call a highlonesometours.com

town. Fortunately, the owner was kind enough to open the store despite it being closed and we foraged for eatables, finding enough to get us through to dinner. We drove out onto the Pawnee Grasslands and found lots of activity, unfortunately not birds, but recreationists due to it being a weekend. Things weren't a complete miss though since we kicked up the only Long-billed Curlew of the trip here. Turning west again, we were back on the road for the long haul to Silverthorne and our drive was only interrupted by a roosting Great Horned Owl that was studied at length in the scope, a Swainson's Hawk, and another Bald Eagle. We reached Silverthorne just in time for our reservation and enjoyed another delicious dinner, celebrating a good number of chickens already under our belt.



Mountain Chickadees were common at higher elevations Photo Stephan Lorenz

April 8th, 2019

This morning, we set out to find the "best" and definitely most difficult chicken of the tour, the White-tailed Ptarmigan. During the early spring, birds are still in their immaculate white winter plumage and often hide among snow drifts. We arrived at Loveland Pass just at dawn and at a lofty 12,000 feet the air was thin and freezing. In addition, an icy wind was whipping up the western side of the pass. After checking some regular haunts for these cryptic birds, basically white on white, some of us headed up the ridge to look further afield. Soon, a single ptarmigan was spotted running across the snow in the valley below. The usual frenzy of radio calls ensued while we tried to get

everyone in position. The bird soon turned, was briefly joined by a second and then the pair flew far down the valley out of sight, but luckily everyone managed a view. In the end, we didn't have to worry, since another pair (or the same?) was spotted huddled next to a spruce and these birds allowed a very close approach. At one point they were walking right towards us as we had gathered to take some photos. All smiles and high fives we collected at the vans to drive back down for a well deserved hot breakfast. After packing up, we drove to a nearby neighborhood to stake out some feeders and while some of the local residents were welcoming, others were not, but we made the most of it, finding nearly all of our targets. First up was something unfeathered when we spotted an American Marten on one of the feeders and the animal hung around for twenty minutes even allowing scope views, a definite first for the tour. Then we turned our attention to rosy-finches and many Brown-capped were present, but diligent scanning eventually got us singles of Gray-crowned and Black, both studied at length in the scope. Other good finds nearby included Canada and Steller's Jays, Black-capped and Mountain Chickadees, Pygmy Nuthatches, and two subspecies of Dark-eyed Juncos. With such great success, we packed up and continued south, leading right through the heart of the Rockies with never ending mountains and rugged canyons.



The unique Lewis's Woodpecker showed well Photo Stephan Lorenz

The next stop was Buena Vista for birds and lunch. The birding couldn't have happened any smoother and we enjoyed great views of all targets in about two hours. First, we found several woodpeckers with great views of Hairy, Northern Flicker, a bonus Red-naped Sapsucker and eventually a responsive and showy Lewis's Woodpecker,

truly one of the most unique species anywhere. A single Townsend's Solitaire nearby was another excellent find. Driving back north a bit, we found ourselves among extensive stands of pinyon pines and started the search for the nomadic Pinyon Jay. We wandered around, hearing the jays calling in the distance, but not getting much closer. Along the way though we picked up Mountain Bluebird, distant Prairie Falcon, and locally uncommon Bushtits, and a surprise Clark's Nutcracker that flew over. Soon though we found two Pinyon Jays that came very close, calling from the tops of the pines and after our initial sighting we of course found the flock. In the end, the birds followed us around and we counted around fifty Pinyon Jays, a wonderful species with its intense blues under sunny skies. On our way to Gunnison, we found several raptors, including Golden Eagle, Northern Harrier, Bald Eagle, Swainson's and Red-tailed Hawks. A roadside cliff also offered scope views of Bighorn Sheep. We stopped near Monarch Pass and soon heard the distinctive drumming of an American Three-toed Woodpecker, the male flew in and gave excellent views in the sunshine as it hitched up a spruce right in front of us, we were doing well indeed. The final distraction as we came out of the mountains onto the sagebrush flats of the Gunnison Basin was a pair of Peregrine Falcons that circled right above the highway. After checking in and a short break we headed out of town for a delicious Italian dinner.



This Dusky Grouse showed well despite some snow flurries Photo Stephan Lorenz

April 9th, 2019

This is always one of the earliest mornings and can also be one of the coldest. Fortunately, while still an early start the temperatures were relatively mild and we were rewarded well for our efforts. We met the local intern well before sunrise and then drove the thirty minutes to the blind set up for the Gunnison Sage-Grouse, waiting patiently in the dark with the valley lying still and cold in front of us. As the first light rose we could spot a few distant sage-grouse and luckily the birds stuck around all morning, many offering distant, but good views in the scope with the distinctive head plumes of displaying males clearly visible. We even saw some birds scurry across an open field to the far left where we could see them well. These had been some of the best views possible in recent years and we all hoped that these rare and endangered birds may be on the upswing. A perched Cooper's Hawk was the only other bird of note seen from the blind. We drove back and defrosted with a warm breakfast before heading back out. We drove north towards the town of Crested Butte and the ski basin above it. Along the way we stopped for American Dippers and watched the antics of two pairs chasing each other around, feeding, and calling with one bird offering excellent photographic opportunities.



American Dippers showed well near their nesting site Photo Stephan Lorenz

The road towards Mt. Crested Butte is an excellent location for Red Foxes and we scored again with an animal walking right next to the road. We found rosy-finches

before we even reached any feeders, revealing that the recent storms further north had pushed birds down the mountains. Brown-capped Rosy-Finches were everywhere and our impromptu stop produced the only Red Crossbills of the trip, while we also added the first Pine Siskins. We eventually found feeders in town that held dozens of Brown-capped Rosy-Finches and several showy adult birds of the normally scarce Black Rosy-Finch. A pair of Cassin's Finches was also welcome, but an Evening Grosbeak showed only briefly. During the drive down, we spotted the first Great Blue Heron standing in an ice fringed stream and had an excellent lunch at a local sandwich shop. Some elected to rest for the remainder of the afternoon while others set out to check a reservoir nearby. The water levels were extremely low and at the usual spot were both goldeneyes normally swim, green grass was growing! We did find a concentration of waterfowl and had good scope studies of Gadwall, Mallard, Green-winged Teal, Ring-necked Duck, Lesser Scaup, Bufflehead, Common Goldeneye, Common Merganser, and Ruddy Duck. Fast-flying White-throated Swifts were also admired in addition to more powder blue Mountain Bluebirds. We then took a break before enjoying another great dinner at a local brewery.



The sprightly Canyon Wren is always fun to encounter Photo Stephan Lorenz

April 10, 2019

We enjoyed a more leisurely start today with breakfast in the hotel and then drove the hour or so to the Black Canyon of the Gunnison National Park. After driving up to the south rim we soon commenced our search for the chicken of the day, the sometimes tricky Dusky Grouse. Deep snow cover blocked access to one of the prime spots, but as

we split up to wander around the paths one was located and offered great views. Such a quick success allowed us to look for a few additional targets and we soon had a vocal pair of "Slate-colored" Fox Sparrows right next to us, while a calling Spotted Towhee was admired in the scope. In dense shrubbery, we came across feeding Evening Grosbeaks and were finally able to admire the golden yellow plumage at leisure. We drove further into the park, stopping at various points to take in the dramatic vistas of dark cliffs dropping precipitously to the rushing river below, one the scenery highlights of the tour for sure. We also added more birds with White-throated Swifts coursing through the chasm and Clark's Nutcracker finally obliging by perching up for all to enjoy. A pair of Red-breasted Nuthatches was added while more Cassin's Finches and Evening Grosbeaks were present. So the predicted snow was arriving and while we tried to bird our way out of the mountains, strong snow flurries and cold winds soon put a stop to birding and we headed to Montrose for lunch. We then nosed the vehicles north and drove towards Grand Junction as the storm system moved through, clearly visible in the distant mountains. We did make a brief stop at Confluence Park along the way where we had more studies of waterfowl we had seen before and enjoyed really close studies of a big flock of swallows that were feeding right over the water due to the inclement weather. The flock included Tree and Barn Swallows, plus two early arriving Bank Swallows. A mixed flock of Bonaparte's and Franklin's Gulls had also put down on the small lake allowing great studies. An Osprey was seen while driving along the main highway and a close Bald Eagle enjoyed at length. We arrived in Grand Junction with enough time to take a break before dinner.



Migrating Franklin's Gull were present on several lakes Photo Stephan Lorenz

April 11th, 2019

The following morning, we again enjoyed a relatively late start before we drove towards the Colorado National Monument. The air was still frigid at the first birding stop and it took some time before the first Gambel's Quail called. In the meantime, we entertained ourselves with a close and vocal Black-throated Sparrow. Finally, a Gambel's Quail approached but was only glimpsed as it ran through the bushes, luckily as we drove further we found a second bird that was teed up on a fence post, offering not only good views but also great photo opportunities. We drove into the national monument and quickly found a responsive Juniper Titmouse at our usual spot. A pair of Bewick's Wrens were less cooperative, but eventually everyone had at least a brief view. We followed the rim drive, taking in the impressive vistas of red sandstone cliffs, towers, and buttresses. Of course, we kept an eye out for a few target species too and after trying a few spots finally located a Canyon Wren that put on a memorable show right in front of us and nearby we finally found the Woodhouses' Scrub-Jay that for some reason had been eluding us up to this stage. A brief stop at the visitor center resulted in some souvenir shopping and a Broad-tailed Hummingbird zipping through for a lucky few. After we exited the national monument at its western gate we carried on west, trying a new spot in the remote sagebrush steppe along the Colorado-Utah border. The detour proved extremely successful and we located at least two Sagebrush Sparrows that eventually sat up at length for extended scope studies. The area also held our only Sage Thrasher of the trip that stayed around long enough for scope views and suddenly a sparrow popped up to the call note of Sagebrush Sparrow, but wait a minute, that is not a Sagebrush Sparrow but an early arriving Brewer's Sparrow, a most welcome bonus.



American Three-toed Woodpecker showed again well Photo Stephan Lorenz

With such success we headed back towards Grand Junction and lunch before another brief stop at the Colorado River State Park. Here, we noted the by now familiar species of waterfowl and raptors, but it was the mixed flock of swallows that we will remember forever. The continuing storm brewing in the mountains had brought masses of swallows that skimmed low over the water, allowing everyone close studies and photo opportunities. In addition to Barn, Bank, and Tree Swallows that we had seen earlier we also noted good numbers of Cliff and Violet-green Swallows, also early arrivals. It was especially fun to study Tree and Violet-green Swallows so closely and note the differences. As we wandered back to the vehicle, we scored another huge surprise for the day when a small bird flitting through the scattered trees turned out to be a Gray Flycatcher, another rare bird this time of year. Before we left the Grand Junction area we visited a nearby canyon to look for the introduced Chukar, diligent scanning and lots of effort only resulted in hearing a distant bird. Despite missing the Chukar we added another Black-throated Sparrow and surprisingly another Gray Flycatcher here, while some came across a Chipping Sparrow. We were just about to load up when some hikers alerted us to Wild Mustangs nearby and of course we hiked up to a ridge overlooking a valley and enjoyed good views of these wild horses. The remainder of the day we spent driving to our accommodation in Craig, seeing more Wild Turkeys and another Golden Eagle along the way.



This Gambel's Quail showed nicely Photo Stephan Lorenz

April 12th, 2019

The Sharp-tailed Grouse necessitated another early morning departure and we again shifted plans a bit this year, heading further west than we normally do. The change in plan worked perfectly. When we arrived at the location about twenty minutes after dawn we could see the result of the storm that had passed through with at least two feet of fresh snow covering the grassland and pastures either side of the road. At first all was highlonesometours.com

quiet, but then a single Sharp-tailed Grouse was spotted perched in a roadside bush with a second bird walking on the ground. The views were ok, but at least the bird was in the bag. We got on a displaying bird on a ridge, but it was soon chased off by a Dusky Grouse! Finally, two males emerged from the hills and walked into the valley, performing their dramatic display right next to the vans. It was fascinating to watch the tail raising and foot stomping dance on a blanket of snow, one bird even flew up to perched on a telephone wire. During our drive out we found Sandhill Cranes, the only Sharp-shinned Hawk, and a cooperative Song Sparrow to boost the list. We even scoped more Sharp-tailed Grouse on an adjacent hill. We were still one winter finch short, the nomadic and unpredictable Pine Grosbeak. Fortunately, we had a good backup location and thus carried on to Steamboat Springs. Walking down to our spot we soon found good activity that included Brown-capped Rosy-Finches and yet another Black Rosy-Finch, plus a noisy flock of Evening Grosbeaks. A pair of White-breasted Nuthatches feeding on a porch were new and Steller's Jays were everywhere, while a Downy Woodpecker finally made it onto the list. Scanning carefully through all the activity we soon found a male Pine Grosbeak perched quietly in a willow, munching on willow buds and sitting in place for the next twenty minutes allowing itself to be photographed from every angle. A second male flew in thus completing all possible winter finches for the tour. From here we drove back into town for lunch, spotting an American Porcupine perched in a bush along the way. After lunch, we carried on north towards Walden, arriving in town in the early afternoon. Before checking into our hotel, we checked Walden Reservoir and found it to be completely frozen, a first for me on the tour. Bizarrely, American White Pelicans were circling above, likely looking for any open leads in the ice and California Gulls had already arrived on their nesting island along with Double-crested Cormorants. Undeterred, we drove a bit further and found a small ice free section that was filled to the brim with ducks right next to the road. We spent a few minutes taking in close views of Canvasback, Redhead, Ring-necked Duck, Lesser Scaup, Bufflehead, Common Merganser, and American Coot. Once we had checked in a few of us continued to the Moose Visitor Center in Colorado State Forest Park. Along the way we came across a pair of Red-tailed Hawks engaged in a magnificent aerial battle with a juvenile Golden Eagle. Things were relatively quiet at the visitor center despite the large amount of snow on the ground, but we ended up with good views of Mountain and Black-capped Chickadees, Dark-eyed Juncos and more Cassin's Finches nearby. An outing after dinner did not produce any Boreal Owls, but at least we had good views of White-tailed Jackrabbits, yet another mammal added to the already impressive list.



Greater Sage Grouse displaying Photo Stephan Lorenz

April 13th, 2019

Our final full day of the tour proved to be a dramatic and absolutely memorable finish. The morning was clear and cold, so we boarded the vans in high hopes for the final lek thirty minutes away. As we drove out of town, snow started to fall heavily and the freezing winds built up ice on the vehicles. We continued slowly and safely, hoping conditions would improve. We arrived after dawn on the location and were pleased to see that several Greater Sage-Grouse were present. During our two hours there conditions improved gradually and with it the grouse became more numerous and active. After some reshuffling of vehicles, we ended up with some of the closest and most dramatic views ever. We could feel the deep booming of the grouse and hear their feet stomping in the fresh snow. The photographic opportunities were out of this world and it was a fitting finish to the lek visits. While we had a lengthy drive ahead through some snowy conditions we did manage a short stop at Windy Gap Reservoir where we quickly picked out a dozen Barrow's Goldeneyes among the hordes of waterfowl. It was also nice to see another American Avocet while a Coyote trotted by. The final birding stop at Genesee Park outside of Denver proved to be quiet, but delivered exactly what we were after. First, we found more Pygmy Nuthatches and the only Brown Creeper of the trip and then a gorgeous male Williamson's Sapsucker was spotted on a telephone pole. The bird stayed for a long time, allowing everyone to get great scope views, marking for a fitting finish to the tour. We cruised through the Arsenal Wildlife Refuge on the way to the hotel, but didn't find anything new. The celebratory dinner was at Ted's Montana where most folks enjoyed bison steak and some excellent wine, ending one of the most successful Colorado tours to date.



This male Williamson's Sapsucker was a great final addition to the list Photo Stephan Lorenz

Bird List:

Ducks, Geese & Swans *Anatidae*

Canada Goose

Branta canadensis moffitti

(9) 2 en route 5.4.
Common throughout.

Cinnamon Teal

Spatula cyanoptera septentrionalium

(1) 2 en route 5.4.
Good views at Holbrook Reservoir.

Blue-winged Teal

Spatula discors

(1) 7 en route 5.4.
This warm weather duck was seen in wetlands in the south of the state.

Northern Shoveler

Spatula clypeata

(6) Up to 20 en route 5-7.4, 2 en route 11.4 and 10 en route 13.4.
Common in lakes and wetlands throughout.

Gadwall

Mareca strepera strepera

(7) 2 en route 5.4, 8 en route 7.4 and 2 en route 11.4.
Common and widespread.

American Wigeon

Mareca americana

(2) 10 en route 5.4.
Seen at Holbrook Reservoir and lakes in the Grand Junction area.

Mallard

Anas platyrhynchos platyrhynchos

(9) Up to 4 en route 5-7.4.
Common.

Northern Pintail

Anas acuta

(1) 12 en route 5.4.
Seen well at Holbrook and other lakes in the southern part.

Green-winged Teal

Anas carolinensis

(4) 20 en route 5.4 and 2 en route 7.4.

Widespread.

Canvasback

Aythya valisineria

(3) 8 en route 5.4, 1 en route 7.4 and 6 en route 12.4.

This elegant duck was seen well at various larger lakes.

Redhead

Aythya americana

(2) 3 en route 12.4 and 2 en route 13.4.

We finally found this distinctive duck on a sliver of open water on the otherwise iced in Walden Reservoir.

Ring-necked Duck

Aythya collaris

(3) 2 en route 12.4.

Uncommon but seen on various lakes.

Lesser Scaup

Aythya affinis

(4) 4 en route 5.4 and 20 en route 12.4.

Widespread.

Bufflehead

Bucephala albeola

(4) 2 en route 5.4 and 4 en route 12.4.

A few seen on various lakes.

Common Goldeneye

Bucephala clangula americana

(3) 12 en route 11.4.

More common than the following species with many excellent studies.

Barrow's Goldeneye

Bucephala islandica

(1) 10 en route 13.4.

We enjoyed fantastic scope views of this neat and uncommon duck at Windy Gap Reservoir during the final day.

Common Merganser

Mergus merganser americanus

(5) 2 en route 8.4 and 20 en route 12.4.

Widespread, especially in the western part of the state.

Red-breasted Merganser

Mergus serrator

(1) 1 en route 5.4.

Uncommon and only seen on Holbrook Reservoir.

Ruddy Duck

Oxyura jamaicensis

(2) 300 en route 5.4.

A large flock was resting on Holbrook Reservoir, also seen on Blue Mesa Reservoir which was another treasure trove for waterfowl.

New World Quail *Odontophoridae*

Scaled Quail

Callipepla squamata hargravei

(1) 12 en route 5.4.

We found several cooperative birds just outside of Pueblo, this first "chicken" of the tour.

Gambel's Quail

Callipepla gambelii gambelii

(1) 2 Colorado National Monument 11.4.

After a bit of searching on a chilly morning outside of Colorado NM we eventually found one teed up on a fence post, offering unparalleled views.

Northern Bobwhite (NT)

Colinus virginianus

(1) 2 Wray 7.4.

We managed to flush a pair into view on the Bledsoe Ranch.

Pheasants, Grouse, and Allies *Phasianidae*

Wild Turkey

Meleagris gallopavo silvestris

(2) 1 en route 6.4 and 20 en route 11.4.

A single seen along the road outside of Wray and more seen on the way to Craig.

Greater Sage-Grouse (NT)

Centrocercus urophasianus

(1) 35 Sage Grouse lek CR26A 13.4.

Another great experience for the final morning as dozens and dozens of these magnificent grouse strutted their stuff on a fresh cover of snow.

Gunnison Sage-Grouse (EN)

Centrocercus minimus

(1) 15 Gunnison--Waunita Hot Springs Road 9.4.

We had better than average views from the blind near Gunnison with birds relatively close this year. We saw them walking and also displaying on the slope of the ridge.

Dusky Grouse

Dendragapus obscurus obscurus

(2) 2 Black Canyon of the Gunnison NP 10.4 and 1 en route 12.4.

Displaying males were within touching distance at the Black Canyon of the Gunnison NP and another chased Sharp-tailed Grouse around outside of Craig.

Sharp-tailed Grouse

Tympanuchus phasianellus columbianus

(1) 7 en route 12.4.

After a patient wait several males emerged from the woodland and displayed in the snow outside of Craig.

Lesser Prairie-Chicken (VU)

Tympanuchus pallidicinctus

(1) 25 en route 6.4.

Some of the best views of the tour yet enjoyed from various blinds on a private ranch in Kansas.

Greater Prairie-Chicken (VU)

Tympanuchus cupido pinnatus

(2) 7 en route 6.4 and 35 Wray 7.4.

The prairie chicken lek in Kansas held several of these next to the previous species, allowing for a close comparison. Of course we had many of them close on the Bledsoe property, one of the best and most dramatic leks of the tour.

White-tailed Ptarmigan

Lagopus leucura altipetens

(1) 4 Loveland Pass 8.4.

We again had a great encounter with this difficult species when a pair wandered within three meters of us at Loveland Pass.

Chukar

Alectoris chukar

(1) 1 heard Cameo 11.4.

Heard only high up in the desert canyon at Cameo.

Ring-necked Pheasant

Phasianus colchicus

(3) 1 en route 5.4, 2 en route 6.4 and 1 Wray 7.4.

Many seen in eastern Colorado.

Grebes Podicipedidae

Eared Grebe

Podiceps nigricollis californicus

(1) 2 en route 5.4.

Seen well on Holbrook Reservoir.

Western Grebe

Aechmophorus occidentalis occidentalis

(1) 8 en route 5.4.

Good numbers scoped on Holbrook Reservoir.

Clark's Grebe

Aechmophorus clarkii clarkii

(1) 2 en route 5.4.

Two were fairly close on Holbrook Reservoir.

Herons, Egrets, and Bitterns *Ardeidae*

Great Blue Heron

Ardea herodias herodias

(4) 4 en route 5.4, 2 en route 9.4 and 1 en route 12.4.

Seen in various wetlands.

Pelicans *Pelecanidae*

American White Pelican

Pelecanus erythrorhynchos

(4) 4 en route 5.4, 2 en route 7.4, 10 en route 12.4 and 10 en route 13.4.

It was especially interesting to watch a flock of these massive birds circle above the frozen Walden Reservoir.

Cormorants and Shags *Phalacrocoracidae*

Double-crested Cormorant

Phalacrocorax auritus auritus

(4) 3 en route 5.4, 1 en route 7.4 and 7 en route 12.4.

Widespread.

New World Vultures *Cathartidae*

Turkey Vulture

Cathartes aura aura

(8) 2 en route 5.4 and 1 Black Canyon of the Gunnison NP 10.4.

The highest numbers were seen in Kansas.

Osprey *Pandionidae*

Western Osprey

Pandion haliaetus carolinensis

(1) 1 en route 10.4.

One seen perched along the highway in the Grand Junction area.

Kites, Hawks & Eagles *Accipitridae*

Golden Eagle

Aquila chrysaetos canadensis

(5) 1 en route 5.4, 2 en route 8.4 and up to 2 en route 11-13.4.

Several seen in the plains and western foothills.

Sharp-shinned Hawk

Accipiter striatus velox

(1) 1 en route 12.4.

One glimpsed briefly.

Cooper's Hawk

Accipiter cooperii

(4) 2 en route 5.4, 1 Gunnison--Waunita Hot Springs Road 9.4 and 1 en route 13.4.

Several noted throughout the tour.

Northern Harrier

Circus hudsonius

Observed 5 day(s) in total.

Fairly common and widespread.

Bald Eagle

Haliaeetus leucocephalus leucocephalus

(7) Up to 2 en route 7-10.4 and 2 en route 13.4.

Numerous, especially in the Grand Junction area and some seen on active nests.

Swainson's Hawk

Buteo swainsoni

(2) 1 en route 7.4 and 1 en route 8.4.

Very low numbers this year, but seen well.

Red-tailed Hawk

Buteo jamaicensis calurus

(9) 2 en route 9.4.

Abundant.

Ferruginous Hawk

Buteo regalis

(1) 1 en route 6.4.

Only a single seen briefly in flight at the lek in Kansas.

Rough-legged Hawk

Buteo lagopus sanctijohannis

(3) 1 en route 5.4, 1 en route 9.4 and 1 en route 13.4.

Great views of one soaring above the highway during our first full day and a few more seen later in the tour.

Rails, Crakes & Coots Rallidae

American Coot

Fulica americana americana

(5) 20 en route 5.4 and 20 en route 10.4.

Seen on various lakes and wetlands.

Cranes Gruidae

Sandhill Crane

Antigone canadensis tabida

(2) 4 en route 12.4.

Seen well in the Craig area where birds nest on the grasslands.

Stilts and Avocets Recurvirostridae

Black-necked Stilt

Himantopus mexicanus mexicanus

(1) 8 en route 5.4.

Seen well at Holbrook Reservoir.

American Avocet

Recurvirostra americana

(2) 4 en route 5.4 and 1 en route 13.4.

Seen well at Holbrook and again at Windy Gap Reservoir.

Plovers and Lapwings Charadriidae

Killdeer

Charadrius vociferus vociferus

(4) 1 en route 12.4.

Widespread.

Mountain Plover (NT)

Charadrius montanus

(1) 2 en route 6.4.

We finally found a pair of these unique and rare shorebirds in fallow fields in central Colorado and enjoyed extended scope studies.

Sandpipers and Allies Scolopacidae

Long-billed Curlew

Numenius americanus

(1) 1 en route 7.4.

A single seen on the Pawnee National Grasslands.

Greater Yellowlegs

Tringa melanoleuca

(1) 1 en route 5.4.

Seen well at Holbrook Reservoir.

Gulls, Terns & Skimmers Laridae

Bonaparte's Gull

Chroicocephalus philadelphia

(3) 10 en route 5.4, 10 en route 10.4 and 2 en route 11.4.

Seen well at Holbrook Reservoir and in the Grand Junction area.

Franklin's Gull*Leucophaeus pipixcan*

(3) 8 en route 5.4 and 15 en route 10.4.

Present at Holbrook Reservoir and again a large flock rested on a lake in the Grand Junction area allowing for close studies.

Ring-billed Gull*Larus delawarensis*

(2) 1 en route 5.4 and 4 en route 9.4.

Only a few noted.

California Gull*Larus californicus californicus*

(2) 1 en route 11.4 and 30 en route 12.4.

Present near their nesting islands on Walden Reservoir besides the water being frozen.

Pigeons and Doves *Columbidae***Rock Pigeon***Columba livia var. domestica*

Observed 6 day(s) in total.

Widespread introduced species.

Eurasian Collared-Dove*Streptopelia decaocto decaocto*

Observed 8 day(s) in total.

This introduced species has increased dramatically in Colorado and is now widespread.

Mourning Dove*Zenaida macroura marginella*

(4) 2 en route 5.4.

Only a few noted.

Owls *Strigidae***Great Horned Owl***Bubo virginianus pallescens*

(1) 1 en route 7.4.

After missing it on the Bledsoe Property it was nice to find a roosting adult along the road towards the Rockies, great scope views.

Burrowing Owl*Athene cunicularia hypugaea*

(3) Up to 12 en route 5-7.4.

Abundant near Blue Mesa Reservoir.

Swifts *Apodidae***White-throated Swift***Aeronautes saxatalis saxatalis*

(4) 5 Buena Vista 8.4, 2 en route 9.4, 20 Black Canyon of the Gunnison NP 10.4 and 50 Cameo 11.4.

Common in the western canyons and gorges.

Hummingbirds *Trochilidae***Broad-tailed Hummingbird***Selasphorus platycercus*

(1) 1 Colorado National Monument 11.4.

One bird was briefly seen in Colorado National Monument, an early arrival.

Woodpeckers *Picidae***Lewis's Woodpecker***Melanerpes lewis*

(1) 1 Buena Vista 8.4.

Great views of a responsive bird in a neighborhood.

Williamson's Sapsucker*Sphyrapicus thyroideus nataliae*

(1) 1 en route 13.4.

The final bird of the tour and what a finish, a male showed territorial drumming on a telephone post and then perched for scope views for minutes on end.

Red-naped Sapsucker

Sphyrapicus nuchalis

(2) 1 Buena Vista 8.4 and 1 en route 12.4.

Great views in Buena Vista of a male.

American Three-toed Woodpecker

Picoides dorsalis dorsalis

(1) 1 en route 8.4.

We again enjoyed great scope views of a male at our stake out and the bird flew in sitting perfectly at eye level.

Downy Woodpecker

Dryobates pubescens leucurus

(2) 1 en route 8.4 and 1 en route 12.4.

One or two recorded.

Hairy Woodpecker

Leuconotopicus villosus septentrionalis

(1) 2 Buena Vista 8.4.

Good, close views in Buena Vista alongside several other species of woodpeckers.

Northern Flicker

Colaptes auratus collaris

(7) 2 en route 5.4, 1 en route 7.4, 1 Buena Vista 8.4 and 2 en route 9.4.

Widespread and common.

Falcons and Caracaras *Falconidae*

American Kestrel

Falco sparverius sparverius

(9) 2 en route 9.4.

Very common.

Prairie Falcon

Falco mexicanus

(1) 2 en route 8.4.

A pair was seen briefly in flight near Buena Vista.

Peregrine Falcon

Falco peregrinus anatum

(2) 2 en route 8.4 and 1 en route 10.4.

A pair soared in stunning light outside of Gunnison.

Tyrant Flycatchers *Tyrannidae*

Say's Phoebe

Sayornis saya saya

(6) 10 Pueblo West 5.4, 2 Wray 7.4 and 1 en route 10.4.

Common and widespread.

Shrikes *Laniidae*

Loggerhead Shrike

Lanius ludovicianus excubitorides

(3) 2 Pueblo West 5.4, 2 Wray 7.4 and 1 en route 12.4.

Best views in the Pueblo area.

Crows, Jays, and Magpies *Corvidae*

Canada Jay

Perisoreus canadensis capitalis

(1) 1 en route 8.4.

One bird was seen briefly but well near Silverthorne.

Steller's Jay

Cyanocitta stelleri macrolopha

(3) 2 Buena Vista 8.4 and 1 Black Canyon of the Gunnison NP 10.4.

The best views for all were in the Gunnison Canyon NP.

Woodhouse's Scrub-Jay

Aphelocoma woodhouseii nevadae

(2) 1 Black Canyon of the Gunnison NP 10.4 and 2 Colorado National Monument 11.4.
We enjoyed close views of this recently split species at the Colorado NM visitor center.

Pinyon Jay (VU)

Gymnorhinus cyanocephalus

(2) 40 Buena Vista 8.4.

We finally found a large flock near Buena Vista of this nomadic, powder blue jay.

Black-billed Magpie

Pica hudsonia

Observed 7 day(s) in total.

Common.

Clark's Nutcracker

Nucifraga columbiana

(2) 1 Buena Vista 8.4 and 2 Black Canyon of the Gunnison NP 10.4.

After seeing one in flight we had excellent views of a pair in the Black Canyon of the Gunnison NP.

American Crow

Corvus brachyrhynchos hesperis

(9) 30 en route 5.4.

Common and widespread.

Common Raven

Corvus corax sinuatus

(8) 2 Pueblo West 5.4 and 1 en route 7.4.

Common especially in the west.

Chihuahuan Raven

Corvus cryptoleucus

(1) 2 en route 5.4.

We found a pair at a stake out near Blue Mesa Reservoir, an uncommon species in Colorado.

Waxwings *Bombycillidae*

Cedar Waxwing

Bombycilla cedrorum

Observed 1 day(s) in total.

A flock seen briefly in flight.

Tits, Chickadees *Paridae*

Juniper Titmouse

Baeolophus ridgwayi ridgwayi

(1) 2 Colorado National Monument 11.4.

Close and great views of this thinly distributed species at Colorado NM.

Black-capped Chickadee

Poecile atricapillus garrinus

(4) 1 en route 7.4 and 2 en route 8.4.

Fairly common.

Mountain Chickadee

Poecile gambeli inyoensis

(2) 6 en route 8.4.

Great views of this high elevation species near Silverthorne.

Larks *Alaudidae*

Horned Lark

Eremophila alpestris entymia

Observed 7 day(s) in total.

Abundant in the eastern grasslands.

Swallows *Hirundinidae*

Bank Swallow

Riparia riparia riparia

(2) 2 en route 10.4 and 4 en route 11.4.

An early arrival and seen among the huge swallow concentrations in the Grand Junction area.

Tree Swallow

Tachycineta bicolor

(3) 50 en route 10.4 and 50 en route 11.4.

Large numbers in the Grand Junction area.

Violet-green Swallow

Tachycineta thalassina

(2) 2 en route 8.4 and 10 en route 11.4.

An early arrival and seen among the huge swallow concentrations in the Grand Junction area.

Barn Swallow

Hirundo rustica erythrogaster

(2) 10 en route 10.4 and 15 en route 11.4.

An early arrival and seen among the huge swallow concentrations in the Grand Junction area.

Cliff Swallow

Petrochelidon pyrrhonota pyrrhonota

(1) 4 en route 11.4.

An early arrival and seen among the huge swallow concentrations in the Grand Junction area.

Long-tailed Tits *Aegithalidae*

Bushtit

Psaltriparus minimus plumbeus

(1) 2 Buena Vista 8.4.

A pair seen well near Buena Vista.

Wrens *Troglodytidae*

Rock Wren

Salpinctes obsoletus obsoletus

(1) 1 Cameo 11.4.

One showed well in Coal Canyon, bobbing about on distant rocks.

Canyon Wren

Catherpes mexicanus conspersus

(1) 1 Colorado National Monument 11.4.

One finally came in very close and sang in full view on the rim of the Colorado NM cliffs.

Bewick's Wren

Thryomanes bewickii cryptus

(1) 2 Colorado National Monument 11.4.

Brief views among the junipers at Colorado NM.

Nuthatches *Sittidae*

Pygmy Nuthatch

Sitta pygmaea melanotis

(2) 4 en route 8.4.

Great studies outside of Silverthorne.

Red-breasted Nuthatch

Sitta canadensis

(2) 2 Black Canyon of the Gunnison NP 10.4 and 2 en route 12.4.

A pair came in to investigate us at the Black Canyon of the Gunnison.

White-breasted Nuthatch

Sitta carolinensis nelsoni

(1) 2 en route 12.4.

A pair was seen well at Steamboat Springs.

Treecreepers *Certhiidae*

Brown Creeper

Certhia americana montana

(1) 1 en route 13.4.

Another addition on the final day on the way back to Denver.

Mockingbirds, Thrashers *Mimidae*

Sage Thrasher

Oreoscoptes montanus

(1) 2 en route 11.4.

Seen well on the border with Utah.

Curve-billed Thrasher

Toxostoma curvirostre celsum

(1) 4 Pueblo West 5.4.

Great studies of a confiding pair near Pueblo.

Starlings *Sturnidae*

European Starling

Sturnus vulgaris vulgaris

Observed 8 day(s) in total.

Widespread.

Thrushes and Allies *Turdidae*

Mountain Bluebird

Sialia currucoides

(5) 1 en route 10.4.

Common in the western part of the state.

Townsend's Solitaire

Myadestes townsendi townsendi

(2) 1 en route 8.4 and 1 Black Canyon of the Gunnison NP 10.4.

Great views of one feeding on berries in the Buena Vista area.

American Robin

Turdus migratorius propinquus

Observed 9 day(s) in total.

Common and widespread.

Dippers *Cinclidae*

American Dipper

Cinclus mexicanus unicolor

(1) 4 en route 9.4.

Two pairs calling and chasing each other around outside of Gunnison.

Old World Sparrows *Passeridae*

House Sparrow

Passer domesticus domesticus

Observed 9 day(s) in total.

Common.

Finches *Fringillidae*

Evening Grosbeak

Hesperiphona vespertina brooksi

(3) 1 Mount Crested Butte 9.4, 20 Black Canyon of the Gunnison NP 10.4 and 30 en route 12.4.

The best views were of a flock that stayed around for an hour near Steamboat Springs.

Pine Grosbeak

Pinicola enucleator montana

(1) 2 en route 12.4.

Two males seen close and well near Steamboat Springs.

Gray-crowned Rosy-Finch

Leucosticte tephrocotis tephrocotis

(1) 1 en route 8.4.

A single was scoped near Silverthorne.

Black Rosy-Finch

Leucosticte atrata

(3) 1 en route 8.4, 5 Mount Crested Butte 9.4 and 1 en route 12.4.

One seen near Silverthorne and excellent numbers in the Crested Butte area, unusually high numbers this year.

Brown-capped Rosy-Finch

Leucosticte australis

(3) 30 en route 8.4, 120 Mount Crested Butte 9.4 and 3 en route 12.4.

The most common of the three rosy-finches in Colorado.

Cassin's Finch

Haemorhous cassinii

(4) 2 Mount Crested Butte 9.4 and 10 Black Canyon of the Gunnison NP 10.4.

We found these in several places this year with many great views.

House Finch

Haemorhous mexicanus frontalis

(7) 1 en route 7.4, 2 en route 9.4 and 2 en route 11.4.

Common.

Red Crossbill

Loxia curvirostra benti

(2) 2 en route 8.4 and 2 Mount Crested Butte 9.4.

We had good views of males near Crested Butte.

American Goldfinch

Spinus tristis pallidus

(1) 5 en route 7.4.

A few came to a feeder near the Pawnee National Grasslands.

Pine Siskin

Spinus pinus pinus

(1) 6 Mount Crested Butte 9.4.

Excellent views near Crested Butte.

Longspurs and Snow Buntings *Calcariidae*

McCown's Longspur

Rhynchophanes mccownii

(2) 300 en route 6.4 and 8 Wray 7.4.

We watched spectacularly large flocks of these longspurs in central Colorado.

Chestnut-collared Longspur (NT)

Calcarius ornatus

(1) 3 en route 7.4.

We again found them nesting at a stake out and one male came in really close to investigate us.

New World Buntings and Sparrows *Passerellidae*

Fox Sparrow

Passerella schistacea schistacea

(1) 2 Black Canyon of the Gunnison NP 10.4.

Good views of a pair sitting up in the campground in the Black Canyon of the Gunnison.

Song Sparrow

Melospiza melodia

(2) 1 en route 12.4 and 1 heard en route 13.4.

Good views near Craig.

White-crowned Sparrow

Zonotrichia leucophrys gambelii

(3) 10 en route 5.4, 8 en route 7.4 and 2 en route 11.4.

A few small flocks seen in the eastern part of the state.

Dark-eyed Junco

Junco hyemalis mearnsi

(7) 1 en route 7.4.

Common and widespread with Gray-headed and Pink-sided subspecies seen.

Chipping Sparrow

Spizella passerina arizonae

(1) 1 en route 11.4.

One briefly glimpsed by some in Coal Canyon.

Brewer's Sparrow

Spizella breweri breweri

(1) 1 en route 11.4.

We had fantastic views near the Utah border, an early arrival.

Vesper Sparrow

Pooecetes gramineus confinis

(3) 2 en route 5.4, 1 en route 6.4 and 2 Wray 7.4.

Seen in various places.

Black-throated Sparrow

Amphispiza bilineata opuntia

(1) 1 Cameo 11.4 and 2 Colorado National Monument 11.4.

Great views of singing birds outside of Colorado NM.

Sagebrush Sparrow

Artemisiospiza nevadensis

(1) 2 en route 11.4.

At least two birds sat up and sang on the sagebrush flats on the Utah border.

Spotted Towhee

Pipilo maculatus arcticus

(2) 1 Black Canyon of the Gunnison NP 10.4 and 1 Colorado National Monument 11.4.
The best views we enjoyed in the campground in the Gunnison NP.

Canyon Towhee

Melospiza fusca mesata

(1) 1 Pueblo West 5.4.

Good views near Pueblo.

Oropendolas, Orioles & Blackbirds Icteridae

Western Meadowlark

Sturnella neglecta neglecta

Observed 8 day(s) in total.

Common.

Red-winged Blackbird

Agelaius phoeniceus fortis

(9) Curecanti NRA--Blue Mesa 6.4.

Abundant.

Brown-headed Cowbird

Molothrus ater ater

(1) 1 Wray 7.4.

Only a single noted on the Bledsoe property.

Common Grackle

Quiscalus quiscula versicolor

Observed 4 day(s) in total.

Common in the east.

Great-tailed Grackle

Quiscalus mexicanus

Observed 3 day(s) in total.

Common in the southeast.



This Red-tailed Hawk and immature Golden Eagle in an aerial duel outside of Walden Photo Stephan Lorenz



The rarely recorded Sagebrush Sparrow was seen well on the tour Photo Stephan Lorenz

Mammal List:

Rabbits, Hares *Leporidae*

Black-tailed Jackrabbit

Lepus californicus

(1) 1 en route 6.4.

Seen well in the eastern grasslands.

White-tailed Jackrabbit

Lepus townsendii

Observed 1 day(s) in total.

Several seen at night as we drove towards Cameron Pass.

Eastern Cottontail

Sylvilagus floridanus

(3) 1 Pueblo West 5.4.

Widespread in the eastern part of the state.

Mountain Cottontail

Sylvilagus nuttallii

(1) 1 Buena Vista 8.4.

Seen well in the intermountain valleys.

New World Porcupines *Erethizontidae*

North American Porcupine

Erethizon dorsatum

(1) 1 en route 12.4.

A great spot of one resting in a tree in the Steamboat Springs area.

Hamsters, New World Rats and Mice, Voles *Cricetidae*

Muskrat

Ondatra zibethicus

(1) 1 en route 11.4.

Seen briefly in a wetland.

Squirrels *Sciuridae*

White-tailed antelope squirrel

Ammospermophilus leucurus

(1) 1 en route 11.4.

Seen well by one observer in Coal Canyon.

Gunnison's Prairie Dog

Cynomys gunnisoni

Observed 2 day(s) in total.

Many seen in the Gunnison area.

White-tailed Prairie Dog

Cynomys leucurus

Observed 2 day(s) in total.

Seen well in the western part of the state.

Arizona Black-tailed Prairie Dog

Cynomys ludovicianus

Observed 4 day(s) in total.

The common prairie dog of the eastern plains and grasslands.

Abert's Squirrel

Sciurus aberti

Observed 1 day(s) in total.

Fantastic views during the final day as we drove back to Denver.

Bryant's Fox Squirrel

Sciurus niger

Observed 2 day(s) in total.

Found in the eastern portion of the tour.

Nevada Ground Squirrel

Spermophilus elegans

Observed 1 day(s) in total.

Observed on the western grasslands.

Thirteen-lined Ground Squirrel

Spermophilus tridecemlineatus

Observed 2 day(s) in total.

Seen well in the eastern farmlands.

Rock Squirrel

Spermophilus variegatus

Observed 1 day(s) in total.

Good views at Holbrook Reservoir.

Least Chipmunk

Tamias minimus

(3) 1 en route 8.4 and 1 Mount Crested Butte 9.4.

The most common chipmunk in the mountains.

Colorado Chipmunk

Tamias quadrivittatus

Observed 1 day(s) in total.

Seen in the mountains at the Black Canyon of the Gunnison.

Hopi Chipmunk

Tamias rufus

Observed 1 day(s) in total.

Seen well at the Colorado NM.

Red Squirrel

Tamiasciurus hudsonicus

Observed 2 day(s) in total.

Seen in the Silverthorne area.

Wolves, Coyote, Foxes, Jackals *Canidae*

Coyote

Canis latrans

Observed 1 day(s) in total.

At least two seen with one showing well standing on fresh snow near Crested Butte.

Red Fox

Vulpes vulpes

Observed 2 day(s) in total.

One showed well at a regular spot outside of Crested Butte.

Weasels, Skunks, Otters *Mustelidae*

American Marten

Martes americana

Observed 1 day(s) in total.

A surprise find and rare mammal to see, but one was eating from a feeder in the Silverthorne area.

American Badger

Taxidea taxus

Observed 1 day(s) in total.

Good but brief views of one crossing the road predawn on the way to the lek in Kansas.

Deer *Cervidae*

Elk

Cervus canadensis

Several seen.

Moose

Alces americanus

(1) 2 en route 13.4.

A mother and calf seen in the mountains.

Mule Deer

Odocoileus hemionus hemionus

Observed 6 day(s) in total.

Common.

Cattle, Antelopes, Sheep, Goats *Bovidae*

American Bison

Bison bison

Observed 1 day(s) in total.

A managed heard seen in the Denver area.

Bighorn Sheep

Ovis canadensis canadensis

Observed 3 day(s) in total.

Seen well as we drove up into the Rockies and again on the way to Gunnison.

Pronghorn *Antilocapridae*

Pronghorn

Antilocapra americana

Observed 4 day(s) in total.

Many seen on the eastern and western grasslands.



Moose Photo Stephan Lorenz



Pronghorn Photo Stephan Lorenz



Gunnison Prairie Dog Photo Stephan Lorenz



Red Fox Stephan Lorenz