

# **COLORADO GROUSE**

**APRIL 23 – MAY 2, 2010**

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Time was short for us (as it was for our 2009 tour group, led by Kevin Zimmer). We also scanned every exposed rock outcrop and patch of willows atop Loveland Pass multiple times. But this year there were several differences. There were no ptarmigan vocalizations. There were hordes of snowboarders and skiers everywhere, and numerous dogs as well. And worst of all, it was very cold, there was a strong wind, and it was snowing, eventually so much that we had only limited visibility. So our search did not end in “Jackpot” (as Kevin exclaimed in 2009). Instead, we abandoned our search, tried Guanella Pass (which was closed for road construction), and admitted that ptarmigans were not to be seen on this trip. But we ended the trip in Genesee Park with a gorgeous male Williamson’s Sapsucker seen front and back, a dozen or more beautiful Western Bluebirds, numerous Pygmy Nuthatches, some Red Crossbills, and a couple of wonderful Abert’s squirrels, whose black coats and long pointed ears imparted an almost sinister appearance.

Colorado in the spring (and maybe all year-round) is like this. Everything is weather-dependent. We enjoyed great weather most of the trip and were able to see all five species of grouse display, including a male Dusky Grouse. We also saw a number of “eastern” vagrants. But, by the time we reached the Pawnee Grasslands, we were about to experience one of those famous Colorado spring storms (or maybe it was two storms?) because we endured wind, and then snow and muddy roads in the Pawnee, and snow and ice-packed roads at high elevations right through to the end of the trip. The upside of the snow was a frosty glaze on the conifer trees on the west side of Rabbit Ears Pass that turned the entire area into a frosty fairyland of almost indescribable beauty.

Highlights singled out by group members included the Long-eared Owl, Williamson’s Sapsucker, McCown’s Longspurs, Lewis’s Woodpeckers, Brown-capped Rosy-Finch, and the incredible display and mating performance (including numerous interrupted attempts) of the Greater Prairie-Chicken. And there were other highlights too. In fact, the entire trip was a splendid journey in and out of spring as we circumnavigated the states from mountains to prairies, and then back to mountains.

## **Here’s a capsule history of what we experienced:**

**4/24.** We spend a cold, frosty morning in a blind watching Gunnison Sage-Grouse, at some distance, strut their stuff with ponytails bouncing. Their spiky tails expanded fanlike, with sharply barred feathers, look like a menacing torture instrument attached to their rears. Spend rest of the morning at a nearby reservoir watching the comings and goings of rosy-finches before working our way eastward to Pueblo, passing some

amazingly nonchalant bighorn sheep and one endearing little Scaled Quail atop a post en route.

**4/25.** This sunny Sunday morning finds us scanning miles of ruler-flat grassland for Mountain Plovers. We find two, eventually, then will see others with much less effort a day later. Then there are the Fowler sewage lagoons (hold your nose, but they have an interesting assortment of ducks), and a vast commercial cattle feed lot with sparrows and blackbirds, and a sea of black and white Holstein steers that might turn more than a few onlookers into vegetarians. Later there is Lake Henry (mostly devoid of birds), the Cheraw Lagoons (teeming with waterfowl and waders, some at close range), and a lunch stop at Boss Hogg's Saloon (surprisingly good and hardly what one would expect from the name). We spend the last hours of the day at John Martin's Reservoir, which produced a few passerine migrants and waterfowl.

**4/26.** Long early morning drive south from Lamar to Springfield. En route we gain just enough elevation to encounter snow and unusually low clouds, which obscure the tops of hundreds of giant wind turbines whose slowly revolving blades disappear into clouds at the tops of their revolution, then reappear at the bottom of each revolution and seem to revolve in a kind of surreal landscape as if everything is in slow motion and out of focus. Could we, somehow, have been privy to a glimpse of the future? A little to the west we pass Pritchett (remember those grain elevators) and a vast landscape of giant fields. Carrizo Canyon, the first real birding destination of the day, is cold and windy, but warms considerably by the time we leave. So did the birds. We lunch in nearby Cottonwood Canyon with Lewis's Woodpeckers looking on, and later enjoy a rather wide-eyed little Rufous-crowned Sparrow in a canyon before undertaking the long drive back to Springfield.

**4/27.** If it is Tuesday this must be Granada. We meet ex-rancher, ex-rodeo cowboy, and all-around practical and jolly fellow Fred Dorenkamp in predawn darkness at a little Stop-2-Shop that is just opening at 4 a.m. for whomever might be wanting gas or coffee or conversation (or bathrooms) at this hour of the morning. We follow Fred to a Lesser Prairie-Chicken lek which is miles to the east and south (I am sure I could see Kansas from where we end up), spend a chilly morning in his old yellow school bus, and obtain some passable views of this now sadly declining species acting out an ages-old spring mating routine. Later we speed back to Granada, prairie rushing by, with a few stops for a surprising number of raptors which are out hunting early in the morning, including a naïve, young, first year Ferruginous Hawk, which may not see its second year if it remains as clueless as it is when we stop to photograph it. Fred and Norma Dorenkamp's biscuits and gravy breakfast at their modest place near Granada is a delight—salt of the earth people, with real prairie stories and histories and country hospitality. And, I might add, they are two rather enterprising people who have discovered how to exploit a unique tourist niche and maybe aid a declining species in the process. All this and our day is only beginning. Seems like the rest of it is driving across the vast, mostly flat eastern Colorado plains, interrupted occasionally by a few tall grain elevators in the distance, some aging farm machinery scattered around farm buildings, and an occasional shiny new John Deere tractor parked near the road. Late

afternoon finds us lounging in the comfortable office of Bob Bledsoe, at once cattle baron, conservationist, mouthpiece for big agriculture and the beef industry, lobbyist for center-pivot irrigation, international beef exporter (to Japan), and dinosaur bone hunter. No question this is one interesting guy with wide-ranging interests and intellect, and hospitable enough to take time from his busy schedule to show us out to one of the Greater Prairie-Chicken leks (one of perhaps 100!) on his considerable acreage.

**4/28.** The Greater Prairie-Chicken show starts early (about 5 a.m.) and continues non-stop until a little after 7:30 when we leave. It is a performance like no other I have seen, complete with nonchalant female wandering amongst assembled males and settling, eventually, on a centrally-located male (surely the alpha-guy) who is delighted, of course, and moved to strut and dance immediately. So, however, is a jealous competitor who has to be chased away over and over, but never gives up. Alpha-guy repeatedly attempts to copulate with the female (she is quite patient and he is stupid for wasting time dancing before every attempt!) and is knocked on his butt, with feathers flying, at least a dozen times by the competitor who resolutely refuses to learn his assigned place, and doesn't have the decency to give alpha-guy even five seconds of privacy. Eventually the ol'boy (alpha-guy) is successful (yes, he still did his dance first!) but... just barely, before being pummeled by his energetic competitor one last time, and also by four other wanna-be competitors who suddenly join the fray, surely sensing that alpha guy is getting tired and on the brink of losing status. The demure little female is hit, stepped on, and repeatedly buffeted by all this unnecessary roughness in what is surely the very definition of Greater Prairie-Chicken "rough sex." The other 20 or so males in attendance are mostly decoration, spending much time in low energy budget, sit-down face-offs. We drive around Wray for a while (doesn't take long) looking for a breakfast restaurant; visit Haxtun lagoons; and waste a little more time around Sterling (what on earth are those Colorado State Parks folks doing?). In the afternoon we speed off westward to a very windy, sandy, and gritty Pawnee National Grasslands with Horned Larks and McCown's Longspurs, but not much else.

**4/29.** We awaken to falling snow in Fort Collins. Decide to revisit the prairie, but the prairie roads are muddy, slippery, and extremely treacherous. The snow-covered prairie is beautiful, however, with hundreds of McCown's Longspurs and Horned Larks scattered, like little black dots, across snowy fields, or gathered in groups, but we see not a single Chestnut-collared Longspur among them and are relieved to exit the place without sliding into the ditch miles from anywhere. Balance of day spent birding up Poudre Canyon to Walden with stops at Glen Echo Resort (chickadees, nuthatches, jays, kinglets, Red-naped Sapsucker, and Fox Sparrow among others), Moose Visitor's Center (great feeder show and Pine Grosbeaks), and cold windy arrival in Walden.

**4/30.** Predawn finds us assembled in the van once again, this time parked beside a group of rather overweight-looking (okay, they are plus-sized) Greater Sage-Grouse who seem to be more about arrogance and bluster than actual business. Rivals are

faced off by just sitting down and staring at them, and for all the great mass of air sac blubberage, the sound emanating is rather puny. No question, however, these grouse are dressed for the dance—white robes drape in front, and wire-like head plumes, spiked tails, and little feathered spats complete the ensemble. We back up a half-mile to depart the lek with minimal disturbance (did any of them even notice we left?), bird Moose Visitor’s Center again, and then begin a rather harrowing drive over Rabbit Ears Pass in a snowstorm complete with white-out conditions, snow and ice-packed road, and traffic inching along in low gear. In the afternoon we explore the interesting Elk River area northwest of Steamboat Springs and go to bed early for yet one final early rise.

**5/1.** An 0415 hours continental breakfast precedes our foray into an unusually cold, raw, and snowy morning, first to view Dusky Grouse (one randy male in dim light stayed and displayed in a little clearing for nearly 20 minutes). Then we backtrack to see a Sharp-tailed Grouse display arena. The latter are active and interesting, as always, like so many little wind-up toys on a grassy hilltop, but cold temperatures and biting wind send everyone scurrying back to the shelter of the van within minutes. The rest of the day is mostly history now. A long drive through some spectacular frosty and snowy high country (especially the west slope of Rabbit Ears Pass), a beautiful perched Prairie Falcon en route, two fruitless attempts to locate a White-tailed Ptarmigan, a late but delightful lunch in Georgetown at Euro Grill Restaurant, and a really nice (but still cold and windy) stop at Genesee Park. The descent through foothills (front range in Colorado-speak) and across Denver spills us out onto the wind-swept plains once again, where a cluster of hotels sit in a huddled clump, surrounded by open prairie. Further still, in the distance, the curious white-capped superstructure of the airport protrudes slightly above the prairie horizon in a kind of alien, incongruous, and futuristic scene that looks more like it should be a science fiction movie set than a functioning twenty-first century airport. Someone spots a lone Burrowing Owl near the hotel, perhaps ruefully contemplating the loss of his former territory, now mostly automobile parking lots and paved streets. Good food and good company at the final dinner bring our journey to completion.

**5/2.** This morning brings departures both east and west carrying, I hope, good memories of this interesting trip. It is, in some sense, a trip through time, blending prairies and mountains, and the ebb and flow and pull and tug of winter and spring, as birds, flowers, and life generally begin anew. We are but observers of this annual pageant, and what a privilege it is to share it with all of you.

**BIRD LIST:**

\* heard only

<i>Ducks &amp; Geese</i>	<i>Anatidae</i>
Canada Goose	Daily in all areas; mainly pairs
Wood Duck	Lamar (2); Bonny Reservoir (2)
Gadwall	Almost daily; large numbers (1000+ in lagoon just west

	of Lamar
American Wigeon	A few including 4 at lagoon just west of Lamar; Walden
Mallard	Small numbers in all areas (mainly singles; pairs etc)
Blue-winged Teal	Seen in most lagoons and reservoirs
Cinnamon Teal	Seen in almost all lagoons and reservoirs
Northern Shoveler	1000s in lagoon west of Lamar; also at Bonny; Haxtun; Walden; etc
Northern Pintail	Walden (2 in small willow marsh south of town)
Green-winged Teal	Haxtun; Walden
Canvasback	Walden
Redhead	Small numbers at numerous sites including Blue Mesa Reservoir; Cheraw; and Walden etc.
Ring-necked Duck	Walden (10-12); Steamboat Springs area (1 male_
Lesser Scaup	Gunnison; Fowler Sewage Lagoons; Cheraw; Haxtun; Walden and Steamboat; 10-30 at most sites
Bufflehead	Fowler Sewage Lagoons (2FF); west of Steamboat (pair)
Common Goldeneye	West of Gunnison (4FF); Walden (pair
Common Merganser	Arkansas River; Poudre River; Steamboat
Ruddy Duck	Blue Mesa Reservoir; Fowler Sewage Lagoons; Cheraw; Haxtun Sewage Lagoons; Walden
<b><i>New World Quails</i></b>	<b><i>Odontophoridae</i></b>
Scaled Quail	Brush Hollow Reservoir (on fence post); east of Pueblo
Northern Bobwhite	Wray
<b><i>Pheasants &amp; Grouse</i></b>	<b><i>Phasianidae</i></b>
Ring-necked Pheasant	Wray
Greater Sage-Grouse	Walden (Coalmont); ca. 23 birds total plus 2 females
Gunnison Sage-Grouse	Gunnison (ca. 26 birds)
Dusky Grouse	Hayden; 1 male displaying; 1 female
Sharp-tailed Grouse	Steamboat Springs area (20 Mile Road); at least 20 on lek; 4 seen previous day closer to Steamboat
Greater Prairie-Chicken	Wray (great display activity); max 28 males; 1 female
Lesser Prairie-Chicken	Granada (about 8 birds on lek)
Wild Turkey	Seen daily in the southeast
<b><i>Grebes</i></b>	<b><i>Podicipedidae</i></b>
Pied-billed Grebe	Near Gunnison (ca. 4 seen)
Eared Grebe	Cheraw Reservoir; Haxtun Sewage Lagoons
Western Grebe	Almost all larger bodies of water throughout trip
Clark's Grebe	Lake Henry (2 seen very close)
<b><i>Pelicans</i></b>	<b><i>Pelecanidae</i></b>
American White Pelican	John Martin Reservoir (near Lamar); Bonny Reservoir; Walden; and near Denver
<b><i>Cormorants</i></b>	<b><i>Phalacrocoracidae</i></b>
Double-crested Cormorant	Lake Henry; Walden and possibly a few other areas

<b><i>Herons &amp; Egrets</i></b>	<b><i>Ardeidae</i></b>
Great Blue Heron	Near Gunnison; several sites in southeast; near Granada; Wray etc
Snowy Egret	John Martin Reservoir (1 bird seen well in scope)
Cattle Egret	One seen by everyone (but we forgot to put it on the list); near Lamar
<b><i>Ibises &amp; Spoonbills</i></b>	<b><i>Threskiornithidae</i></b>
White-faced Ibis	Cheraw Reservoir; 2 seen nw of Steamboat Springs
<b><i>New World Vultures</i></b>	<b><i>Cathartidae</i></b>
Turkey Vulture	All days and all elevations
<b><i>Hawks &amp; Eagles</i></b>	<b><i>Accipitridae</i></b>
Osprey	Several areas including (at least) near Pueblo; entrance to Poudre Canyon; near Silverthorne
Bald Eagle	Walden (pair on nest at John's Lake)
Northern Harrier	Granada; Wray; Pawnee; Walden and Steamboat
Sharp-shinned Hawk	Seen on at least 5 of the 8 birding days including 1 at Cottonwood Canyon that almost captured a Bewick's Wren we were watching
Cooper's Hawk	1 nw of Steamboat
Red-tailed Hawk	Daily and at all elevations
Ferruginous Hawk	Adult carrying nest material west of Prichett; 1 <sup>st</sup> year bird se of Granada) nicely photographed
Golden Eagle	One seen in Carrizo Canyon; another in Pawnee
<b><i>Falcons</i></b>	<b><i>Falconidae</i></b>
American Kestrel	Daily from grasslands to high mountain plains
Prairie Falcon	One ne of Gunnison; another also in flight between Carrizo and Cottonwood canyons; one seen perched close south of Kremmling
<b><i>Rails &amp; Gallinules</i></b>	<b><i>Rallidae</i></b>
American Coot	Virtually all bodies of water throughout trip
<b><i>Cranes</i></b>	<b><i>Gruidae</i></b>
Sandhill Crane	Several west of Steamboat; a 5-6 near Kremmling; these presumably nest in this area
<b><i>Plovers &amp; Lapwings</i></b>	<b><i>Charadriidae</i></b>
Snowy Plover	At least 5 at Cheraw reservoir
Semipalmated Plover	1 at Cheraw Reservoir
Killdeer	Seen all except first and last days
Mountain Plover	Two on IO road; at least 3 more sw of Prichett
<b><i>Avocets &amp; Stilts</i></b>	<b><i>Recurvirostridae</i></b>
Black-necked Stilt	Cheraw Reservoir (ca. 25); Haxtun Sewage Lagoons (1)
American Avocet	Cheraw Reservoir (at least 35); 1 at Haxtun
<b><i>Sandpipers &amp; allies</i></b>	<b><i>Scolopacidae</i></b>
Solitary Sandpiper	Lamar Community College stream
Greater Yellowlegs	Sterling (lagoons north of town); Walden

Willet	Cheraw Reservoir; Walden
Lesser Yellowlegs	Cheraw Reservoir; Sterling; Walden
Upland Sandpiper	Wray (2 at Bledsoe's ranch)
Long-billed Curlew	Cheraw Reservoir (4); south of Prichett (3); Wray (3)
Western Sandpiper	Cheraw Reservoir (ca. 50+)
Least Sandpiper	Cheraw Reservoir (2)
Long-billed Dowitcher	Cheraw Reservoir (at least 12)
*Wilson's Snipe	Gunnison (hd predawn while waiting for Gunnison Sage-Grouse to display)
Wilson's Phalarope	Cheraw Reservoir; Haxtun; Walden etc
<b><i>Gulls and Terns</i></b>	<b><i>Laridae</i></b>
Bonaparte's Gull	Cheraw Reservoir (1)
Franklin's Gull	Lagoons and prairies on first 3 days of trip
Ring-billed Gull	Lagoons in eastern (plains) part of trip
California Gull	Walden (John's Lake); many but rather distant; these nest here
Forester's Tern	John Martin Reservoir; Cheraw Reservoir
<b><i>Pigeons &amp; Doves</i></b>	<b><i>Columbidae</i></b>
Rock Pigeon	Almost all settled areas
Eurasian Collared-Dove	All settled areas including even in Kremmling in mts (an impression invasion)
Mourning dove	All days and almost all areas
<b><i>Barn Owls</i></b>	<b><i>Tytonidae</i></b>
Barn Owl	One predawn flushed from roadside north of Hayden
<b><i>Typical Owls</i></b>	<b><i>Strigidae</i></b>
Great Horned Owl	Granada (nest with young); Bonny Reservoir (adult)
Burrowing Owl	East of Pueblo on IO road and virtually through in eastern half of state including 1 at Denver International Airport last evening
Long-eared Owl	Beautiful adult at Bonny Reservoir (with excellent directions to site from Brian Gibbons)
<b><i>Swifts</i></b>	<b><i>Apodidae</i></b>
Chimney Swift	Fowler (over city); migratory flock over Pawnee grasslands
White-throated Swift	Large group around cliffs nw of Gunnison
<b><i>Kingfishers</i></b>	<b><i>Alcedinidae</i></b>
Belted Kingfisher	Arkansas River; Poudre River; west of Steamboat Springs
<b><i>Woodpeckers</i></b>	<b><i>Picidae</i></b>
Lewis's Woodpecker	Cottonwood Canyon; 4 or more close during our picnic
Red-bellied Woodpecker	Bonny Reservoir; very responsive pair
Williamson's Sapsucker	Close male front and back at Genesee Park (Wow!)
Red-naped Sapsucker	Glen Echo Resort and one in Georgetown
Downy Woodpecker	One at John Martin Reservoir; pair at Bonny Reservoir
Hairy Woodpecker	Cottonwood Canyon

*Amer. Three-toed Woodpecker	Hd at pullout at Rabbit Ears pass but would not respond
Northern Flicker	Daily in numbers; migrating groups near Steamboat and probably elsewhere
<b><i>Tyrant Flycatchers</i></b>	<b><i>Tyrannidae</i></b>
Eastern Phoebe	Carrizo Canyon (at least 3 pairs)
Say's Phoebe	Almost all areas for first five days (last seen on Pawnee)
Ash-throated Flycatcher	Carrizo Canyon and Cottonwood Canyon
Western Kingbird	Seen in various places beginning at Brush Hollow Reservoir on first day; throughout the southwestern area and last one near Lamar
<b><i>Shrikes</i></b>	<b><i>Laniidae</i></b>
Loggerhead Shrike	Seen the first five days beginning at Brush Hollow Reservoir; at least 6 in grasslands near Carrizo and Cottonwood; last one near Sterling
<b><i>Crows and Jays</i></b>	<b><i>Corvidae</i></b>
Stellar's Jay	Glen Echo Resort; Moose Visitor Center; Georgetown
Blue Jay	Three at Fowler; 2 at Lamar Community College
Western Scrub-Jay	Seen nicely at Cottonwood Canyon
Black-billed Magpie	Almost everywhere from prairies to high mountain valleys
American Crow	Another widespread species but mostly in or near mts.
Chihuahuan Raven	Seen from Pueblo to Lamar and Springfield areas
Common Raven	Common in mountains including 4 high over Loveland Pass in snowstorm
<b><i>Larks</i></b>	<b><i>Alaudidae</i></b>
Horned Lark	Daily except first day; hundreds on Pawnee grasslands
<b><i>Swallows</i></b>	<b><i>Hirundinidae</i></b>
Violet-green Swallow	Several along Arkansas River canyon between Salida and Canyon City but I do not think we stopped for these
Tree Swallow	A few between Pueblo and Lamar but I cannot recall where (near Fowler?)
Northern Rough-winged Swallow	John Martin Reservoir and Lamar Community College
Cliff Swallow	Many under bridges in eastern part of state; largest colony was at Granada with a 1000+ birds
Barn Swallow	Mainly eastern Colorado where seen commonly at least through Wray
<b><i>Chickadees</i></b>	<b><i>Paridae</i></b>
Black-capped Chickadee	One seen at feeder nw of Gunnison; 4 at Glen Echo Resort
Mountain Chickadee	Several first day at feeder nw of Gunnison; also Glen Echo Resort and Georgetown

<i>Nuthatches</i>	<i>Sittidae</i>
Red-breasted Nuthatch	Glen Echo Resort; Georgetown; Genesee Park
Pygmy Nuthatch	Glen Echo Resort; Genesee Park (cute!)
<b>Wrens</b>	<b>Troglodytidae</b>
Rock Wren	Carrizo and Cottonwood Canyon
Canyon Wren	Carrizo and Cottonwood Canyon
Bewick's Wren	Carrizo and Cottonwood Canyon
House Wren	Carrizo Canyon
Carolina Wren	Lamar Community College; rare this far west
<i>Dippers</i>	<i>Cinclidae</i>
American Dipper	Pair beautifully in Poudre Canyon
<i>Kinglets</i>	<i>Regulidae</i>
Golden-crowned Kinglet	Cottonwood Canyon
Ruby-crowned Kinglet	Cottonwood Canyon; Glen Echo Resort
<i>Gnatcatchers</i>	<i>Sylviidae</i>
Blue-gray Gnatcatcher	Carrizo Canyon
<i>Thrushes</i>	<i>Turdidae</i>
Western Bluebird	Genesee Park (many!)
Mountain Bluebird	Widespread in mountains; seen particularly well nw of Steamboat Springs and south of Kremmling
Hermit Thrush	One in Kremmling
American Robin	Daily in numbers; all areas from prairies to conifer forest
<i>Mockingbirds &amp; Thrashers</i>	<i>Mimidae</i>
Northern Mockingbird	Mainly in SW Colorado (Pueblo to Lamar etc)
Sage Thrasher	Only one seen was at Blue Mesa Reservoir west of Gunnison (seen by SH and very briefly by one or two others); where were they?
Brown Thrasher	Carrizo Canyon and Lamar Community College
Curve-billed Thrasher	East of Pueblo near small town of Boone
<i>Starlings</i>	<i>Sturnidae</i>
European Starling	Almost all days
<i>Pipits &amp; Wagtails</i>	<i>Motacillidae</i>
American Pipit	One in Gunnison
<i>Waxwings</i>	<i>Bombycillidae</i>
Cedar Waxwing	Carrizo Canyon; Steamboat Springs (by Winnona's Restaurant!)
<i>New World Warblers</i>	<i>Parulidae</i>
Orange-crowned Warbler	Carrizo Canyon and Cottonwood Canyon (3 seen)
Yellow-rumped Warbler	Gunnison; John Martin Reservoir; Carrizo and Cottonwood Canyons; Lamar
(eastern Myrtle type)	Gunnison; John Martin Reservoir; Carrizo and Cottonwood Canyons; Lamar
(western Audubon's type)	Gunnison; John Martin Reservoir; Carrizo and Cottonwood Canyons; Lamar (about half of all

	sightings were this subspecies with a dozen each or more at John Martin Reservoir west of Lamar
<b><i>Finches and Sparrows etc.</i></b>	<b><i>Emberizidae</i></b>
Spotted Towhee	Arkansas River west of Pueblo; Cottonwood Canyon
Canyon Towhee	Carrizo Canyon
Rufous-crowned Sparrow	Cottonwood Canyon (1 seen nicely)
Chipping Sparrow	Numerous migrating flocks from Gunnison to Lamar area; near Steamboat
Vesper Sparrow	Migrating flocks seen daily in numbers; peaks of 50+ between Pueblo and Lamar; and near Steamboat
Lark Sparrow	Pair near Cottonwood Canyon
Savanna Sparrow	Gunnison area and Wray (Bledsoe Ranch)
Fox Sparrow	Glen Echo Resort (subsp with gray foreparts)
Song Sparrow	Glen Echo Resort (1 along creek)
Lincoln's Sparrow	Carrizo Canyon (2 seen)
White-crowned Sparrow	Small numbers daily (all areas)
Dark-eyed Junco	Almost all areas (especially in mountains)
(gray-headed form)	Almost all areas
(pink-sided form)	Near Gunnison
McCown's Longspur	Pawnee National Grassland (100s in snow)
<b><i>Cardinals &amp; Allies</i></b>	<b><i>Cardinalidae</i></b>
Northern Cardinal	Lamar Community College (1 male singing loudly!)
<b><i>Blackbirds etc</i></b>	<b><i>Icteridae</i></b>
Red-winged Blackbird	Daily in all areas
Western Meadowlark	Daily in all areas
Yellow-headed Blackbird	Seen throughout the southwestern corner of state; also Walden and Steamboat
Brewer's Blackbird	Gunnison; Lamar/Springfield area; Moose Visitor Center; Kremmling
Common Grackle	Almost daily; all elevations
Great-tailed Grackle	Mainly Pueblo/Lamar/Granada/Wray areas
Brown-headed Cowbird	Near Gunnison; Carrizo; Lamar
<b><i>Siskins &amp; Crossbills</i></b>	<b><i>Fringillidae</i></b>
Black Rosy-Finch	2 (briefly) at a feeder nw of Gunnison
Brown-capped Rosy-Finch	150+ at feeders nw of Gunnison
Pine Grosbeak	Moose Visitor Center (4 seen beautifully in scope)
Cassin's Finch	Feeders nw of Gunnison; Echo Lodge; Moose Visitor Center; Kremmling; Georgetown
House Finch	Gunnison; Pueblo; Lamar; Georgetown
Red Crossbill	Genesee Park (2 briefly in scope; at least 4-6 others seen in flight)
Pine Siskin	Genesee Park (several pairs)
American Goldfinch	John Martin Reservoir; Lamar
<b><i>Old World Sparrows</i></b>	<b><i>Passeridae</i></b>
House Sparrow	All areas

**MAMMALS:**

Eastern Cottontail	Wray (Bledsoe Ranch)
Mountain Cottontail	Blue Mesa Reservoir; Steamboat Springs
Desert Cottontail	East of Pueblo
White-tailed Jackrabbit	
Black-tailed Jackrabbit	
Yellow-bellied Marmot	West of Steamboat Springs on rocky hillside
Eastern Fox Squirrel	Several areas in eastern Colorado including Sterling
Abert's Squirrel	Genesee Park (2 seen well!)
White-tailed Prairie Dog	Steamboat Springs
Black-tailed Prairie Dog	All over eastern Colorado from Pueblo to Lamar to Wray
Rock Squirrel	Carrizo/Cottonwood Canyon
Wyoming Ground-Squirrel	Numerous south of Walden
Spotted Ground-Squirrel	Between Lamar and Wray (roadside); seen by SH; others?
Muskrat	East of Pueblo; Lamar; Walden
Least Chipmunk	Moose Visitor Center
Chipmunk sp.	Nw of Gunnison
Mouse sp.	Running across road east of Pueblo (ran, not hopped; notably long tail and whitish below)
Coyote	Numerous areas; especially in mountains
[Red Fox]	Two animals seen dead on road; one near Pueblo
Striped Skunk	One predawn east of Gunnison (across road)
Pronghorn	Open areas on eastern plains and in open areas in mountains
Bighorn Sheep	Arkansas River canyon (between Salida and Canyon City); near Georgetown
Elk	Group of 50+ southwest of Walden
Mule Deer	Many areas including Lamar
White-tailed Deer	Pawnee

Ca. 167 species of birds and 22 species of mammals (plus a couple other unidentified small mammals, two road kill Red Foxes), and a brave pasque flower blooming in Genesee Park.