

SPRING WASHINGTON

MAY 22-JUNE 2, 2004

**LEADERS:
BOB SUNDSTROM**

COMPILED BY: BOB SUNDSTROM

**VICTOR EMANUEL NATURE TOURS, INC.
2525 WALLINGWOOD DRIVE, SUITE 1003
AUSTIN, TX 78746
WWW.VENTBIRD.COM**

HIGHLIGHTS

The Spring Washington Tour began with a day in the Puget Sound lowlands and the Black Hills, which got us off to an excellent start with nice views of a batch of Red-breasted Sapsuckers and Rufous Hummingbirds, plus great looks at MacGillivray's, Hermit, Black-throated Gray, and other warblers; Olive-sided, Willow, Pacific Slope and other flycatchers; and spectacular views of red and yellow male Western Tanagers - a view we were to repeat every day of the tour! A boat trip on the nearly glassy surface of the Strait of Juan de Fuca on a lovely day yielded close views of five alcid species, including Marbled Murrelet and Tufted Puffin within a few yards of the boat; and hundreds of extremely busy and vocal nesting Pigeon Guillemots whistled their surprising calls and flashed their bright red feet. A few stunning, breeding plumage Pacific Loons were still migrating through. A day in the Olympic National Forest and nearby areas gave us close roadside views of Blue Grouse, Varied Thrush, Swainson's Thrush, and spiffy Townsend's Warblers, plus breeding plumage Harlequin Ducks

Heading east of the Cascade Mountains for the bulk of the tour, we added a long list of species on our first afternoon and full day, including White-headed Woodpecker and Red-naped Sapsucker, loads of Mountain and Western Bluebirds, Townsend's Solitaire, Sage Sparrow and the other sage specialty species, the first of three Prairie Falcons, very close views of brilliant Lazuli Buntings and Calliope Hummingbirds, and an excellent night study of a tiny Flammulated Owl. Ensuing days found us birding the potholes region (Clark's and Western grebes, Yellow-headed Blackbirds, nesting waterfowl and herons and terns, a Rock Wren at ten feet) and up through the many habitats of a basalt rimmed canyon which began at the Columbia River and climbed 3000 ft. (close views of Chukar, soaring Golden Eagles, more Lazuli Buntings, Bullock's Oriole, great scope views of Canyon Wren and Yellow-breasted Chat, a herd of Bighorn Sheep).

Now we arrived in the Okanogan region for four nights, one of the richest in overall bird diversity in the Northwest, where we spent much of our time in the highlands. Both Spruce Grouse and Ruffed Grouse were seen right on the roadway, and we had nice views of a male Black-backed Woodpecker and more than half a dozen each of Williamson's Sapsuckers and American Three-toed Woodpeckers. A flock of Boreal Chickadees completed the four species of chickadees for the trip, and superb scope views of Lewis's Woodpeckers and a pair of Pileated Woodpeckers gave us eleven woodpecker species. Lovely Black Terns, Wilson's Phalaropes, Common Loons, Red-necked Grebes, Wilson's Snipe, and many waterfowl posed for scope views on mountain lakes, and two Northern Pygmy-Owls tooted in the open from the trees. Our final day's drive took us across the North Cascades Highway and through its stunning alpine scenery, and was highlighted by nice looks at a Pine Grosbeak as the notes of Varied Thrushes echoed in the background.

We had very good studies of a large proportion of the 202 species seen during the course of the tour, which included 11 woodpecker species, 8 finches, all 3 woodland grouse, and much more. Lots of great scenery, excellent food, and fine camaraderie helped make it an even more memorable tour.

ITINERARY SKETCH

Day 1, May 22: Arrival in Seattle and get-acquainted dinner; night in Seatac.

Day 2, May 23: First birding of the morning in the Tenino/upper Scatter Creek vicinity. Lunch in Tenino. Midday morning we drove west to bird in Capitol State Forest, working most of the way to the top of Rock Candy Mt. Late afternoon north on Hwy. 101 (along parts of Hood Canal) to Sequim, stopping occasionally along the water's edge and at the Quilcene fish hatchery. Night in Sequim.

Day 3, May 24: First birding of the morning was a brief stop before breakfast along Sequim Bay near the marina, at a small slough. After breakfast in Sequim, the bulk of the morning's birding was along road that runs up from Port Angeles to Hurricane Ridge (5200') in Olympic National Park. After lunch in Port Angeles, birded at Lincoln Park and Ediz Hook in Pt. Angeles, and near the town of Dungeness. Night in Sequim.

Day 4, May 25: Right after breakfast in Sequim, we boarded a private charter boat trip to bird the inshore marine waters around Protection Island and near the tip of Dungeness Spit. After returning to the Sequim Bay marina, we drove south to ferry across Puget Sound on the Kingston to Edmonds ferry; stopped for lunch in Seattle near Green Lake. After lunch drove east across Snoqualmie Pass with birding stops at: Tinkham Rd. exit, Snoqualmie Pass, Gold Creek, and near the Roslyn exit. Night in Cle Elum.

Day 5, May 26: Before breakfast, we stopped in a Cle Elum residential area to scope Evening Grosbeaks. After breakfast in Cle Elum, we drove south of Ellensburg on Hwy. 82 to bird the sage/steppe near Exit #11, then continued south to bird at the Selah Canyon overlook. From Selah, took N. Wenas Rd. all the way to entry road to Wenas Ck. Campground, where we birded and picnicked. Mid-afternoon, birded back toward Ellensburg on Umtanum Rd. After a break and dinner in Cle Elum, we drove toward Ellensburg to bird at dusk along Green Valley Rd. and Hungry Jct. Rd., north of E'burg. Around dark we headed into the Wenatchee Mts. near Liberty to owl. Arrived back at the motel at 1:00 a.m.

Day 6, May 27: Breakfast in Cle Elum. Birded east of town near Hidden Valley Rd., before driving across the open country north of Ellensburg, then east on the Vantage Hwy., stopping in Schnebley Coulee area. Crossed the Columbia R. at Vantage, then birded Frenchman Coulee and along I-90 frontage road to Moses Lake; lunch in Moses Lk. Afternoon birding in Potholes Wildlife Area, then drove north via Quincy. On to East Wenatchee for the night.

Day 7, May 28: Birded all the way up Swakane Canyon, and then drove back down. Lunch in Entiat at Entiat Valley Pastry. Drove north along the west side of the Columbia River in the afternoon to Omak, checked in late afternoon to motel in Omak. Evening birding and picnic dinner near Havillah, then returned to Omak. Night in Omak.

Day 8, May 29: Drove south and west from Omak, to bird near Loup Loup in Okanogan National Forest, before driving through Twisp (stopping at Cinnamon Twisp Bakery) and Winthrop to ascend FR37 and then FR39 as far as Freezeout Pass, where we picnicked. Backtracked to FR37 and drove east across Baldy Pass to Conconully. Dinner and night in Omak.

Day 9, May 30: Birded north from Tonasket up to Havillah and the Sno-Park, then on via Muskrat Lake toward Chesaw area. Picnicked along the forest edge within a mile of the Canadian border. Then south north along Beaver and Beth Lakes and down Toroda Ck. Rd. to Hwy. 20, then back north on Bonaparte Lake Rd. and up the road toward Virginia Lilly Trail. Returned to Hwy. 20 and drove via Tonasket to Omak. Dinner and night in Omak.

Day 10, May 31: Birded west from Tonasket toward Loomis, along the Okanogan River, Whitestone and Spectacle Lakes, in Loomis, then west along Toats Coulee Rd., including a side trip up Iron Gate Rd. Drove to higher elevations on the FR39 south from Long Swamp campground to beyond Thunder Mt., where a tree across the road forced us to backtrack via Toats Coulee Rd. toward Omak. Dinner in Tonasket. Last of four nights in Omak.

Day 11, June 1: After breakfast in Omak, drove west on the North Cascades Highway, birding along Twisp River Rd., at Lone Fir Campground east of the Cascade crest, and at Washington Pass. On the west slope, stopped at Diablo Lk. overlook, Canyon Creek trailhead (picnic), Gorge Ck. overlook, and in Newhalem (visited North Cascades NP Visitors' Center). Late afternoon birding stop near Stanwood at the north end of Port Susan Bay. Dinner in Seattle; night in Seatac.

Day 12, June 2: Departures.

BIRDS OBSERVED

[species in *italics* are unusual, rare, or otherwise special sightings for the tour]

LOONS:

Pacific Loon - A couple of fancy breeding plumage and some basic plumage loons were seen on the boat trip - likely the last of the northbound spring migrants in the area.

Common Loon - a pair on a mountain lake, in perfect light showing the neck's iridescence

GREBES:

Pied-billed Grebe

Red-necked Grebe - Stunning, copper-plated looking grebes. A pair performed a series of parallel movements while swimming, together with a loud series of vocalizations. Others sat atop floating nests.

Eared Grebe

Western Grebe - both this species and Clark's were seen in comparison on Moses Lake

Clark's Grebe

CORMORANTS:

Double-crested Cormorant

Pelagic Cormorant - lots of these white-flanked and red-faced cormorants near Protection Is.

BITTERNS & HERONS:

Great Blue Heron

Great Egret - on a nest in the Potholes Wildlife Area

Green Heron - on upper Scatter Creek, close views of one at a marsh

Black-crowned Night-Heron - flying by at Potholes Wildlife Area

AMERICAN VULTURES

Turkey Vulture

GEESE, SWANS & DUCKS:

Canada Goose

Wood Duck

Gadwall - nice views of this underrated beautiful duck

American Wigeon

Mallard

Blue-winged Teal - often on the same ponds as handsome Cinnamon Teal, in the potholes and the Okanogan mountain meadows

Cinnamon Teal - much admired, deep chestnut colored drakes
Northern Shoveler - near Dungeness and in Potholes Wildlife Area
Northern Pintail - a few near Dungeness, on the salt water edge
Green-winged Teal - pairs in the Okanogan

Redhead

Ring-necked Duck - How often do you actually see the "ring" on the neck? The light was perfect at Beaver Lake in the Okanogan area to see the chestnut ring on a drake's black neck, a drake with hung around quite close.

Greater Scaup - ditto

Lesser Scaup - ditto

Harlequin Duck - dozens, including some bright breeding plumaged males, near Pt. Angeles

Surf Scoter - at Ediz Hook and on the boat trip

White-winged Scoter - a couple on the Protection Is. boat trip and the ferry ride from Kingston

Barrow's Goldeneye - scoped on Muskrat Lake in the Okanogan

Hooded Merganser - nice views of both sides of the Cascades where nesting on ponds

Common Merganser - a few along Hood Canal south of Brinnon

Ruddy Duck - fancy blue-billed and rufous-bodied males in the potholes and Okanogan

EAGLES, HAWKS & ALLIES:

Osprey

Bald Eagle - seen on both sides of the state, with the biggest concentration around Protection Island where at least 15-20 eagles kept an eye on those thousands of nesting seabirds

Northern Harrier - near Ellensburg and near Chesaw

Sharp-shinned Hawk - one or two were seen in flight near Tenino

Cooper's Hawk

Swainson's Hawk - we saw mostly dark morphs, with some great views near Havillah

Red-tailed Hawk - lots of light morphs and a few dark

Golden Eagle - Jan first spotted one perched high on the walls of Swakane Canyon, half of a pair soon seen soaring; she later spotted a pair soaring close overhead in the Okanogan region.

FALCONS:

American Kestrel

Peregrine Falcon - One was seen soaring near the cliffs high above Gorge Ck. west of Diablo Lk.; the interior of the state has only a few breeding pairs of Peregrines

Prairie Falcon - three different sightings in the eastern part of the state

GALLINACEOUS BIRDS:

Chukar - We first scoped a bird on a canyon wall just a few miles up from the Columbia River, for very good views at a distance. Not long after, a pair walked along the road not far in front of our vehicle, for exceptional views. Heard and seen briefly later in the Okanogan.

Ring-necked Pheasant - heard

Ruffed Grouse - Not long after one flushed across the road and was seen only by Joan, we had excellent looks at a gray-morph grouse as it stepped very cautiously across a forest road in the Okanogan Highlands.

Spruce Grouse - We had excellent views of a hen in the spruce/lodgepole pine zone of the Okanogan as it walked slowly in front of us on the road. This species is very local in the state, and it is always a treat to find one in the spring.

Blue Grouse - a male posed right by the roadside as we drove up toward Hurricane Ridge in Olympic National Park; a second grouse was seen during our descent

California Quail - many great views, especially of males perched atop fenceposts

RAILS & COOTS:

Virginia Rail - A rail came to within a few feet of us right in the open on a marsh along Scatter Creek, on the first full day of the tour.

Sora - several heard repeatedly near Beaver Lk. in the Okanogan, but not showing themselves
American Coot

PLOVERS:

Killdeer - as ubiquitous as just about any bird seen on the tour

SANDPIPERS & ALLIES:

Black Oystercatcher - along the beach on Protection Island

Spotted Sandpiper - widespread

Whimbrel - five flew out from the spit at the mouth of Sequim Bay

Long-billed Curlew - just north of the Ellensburg airport along Hungry Jct. Rd.

Wilson's Snipe - some spectacular views of snipe perched atop fenceposts; others winnowing

Wilson's Phalarope - nice scope views of birds at Muskrat Lake

JAEGERS, GULLS, & TERNS:

Heermann's Gull - quite a surprise for the date was a breeding plumaged adult on Ediz Hook

Mew Gull - a few immatures along the Dungeness waterfront, unexpected for the season

Ring-billed Gull

California Gull - immatures near Puget Sound; breeders in the interior

Western Gull

Glaucous-winged Gull

Caspian Tern - seen at a variety of spots, from Dungeness to the Columbia River

Forster's Tern - near nesting area in the Potholes Wildlife Area

Black Tern - superb views on Muskrat and Beaver Lakes

AUKS:

Common Murre - a variety of plumages in the ten or so seen on the boat trip

Pigeon Guillemot - hundreds, probably thousands, seen on the boat trip

Marbled Murrelet - an endangered species; terrific views of an adult just as we left the harbor

Rhinoceros Auklet - thousands seen on the boat trip

Tufted Puffin - probably 15-20 seen near Protection Is., some excellent views right near the boat

PIGEONS & DOVES:

Rock Pigeon (formerly Rock Dove)

Band-tailed Pigeon - seen at a variety of spots on the first two full days of the tour in western Washington, from the lowlands to higher elevations along the Hurricane Ridge Rd.

Mourning Dove

OWLS:

Flammulated Owl - A species with a reputation for being very hard to see, we had very good spotlighted views of a calling bird north of Liberty; another was heard at a distance.

Northern Pygmy-Owl - After much tooting by the leader in likely pygmy-owl habitat during the tour, we were at least treated to some great views in the Okanogan region.

Barred Owl - One came in to check us out along the road outside Loup Loup Campground in the Okanogan National Forest.

Short-eared Owl - four seen at dusk foraging over the fields north of Ellensburg

NIGHTJARS:

Common Nighthawk - a late migrant, we saw only one (near Potholes Wildlife Area)

Common Poorwill - brief views of one at night near Burge Mt. (Okanogan region)

SWIFTS:

Vaux's Swift - many views of this small swift

White-throated Swift - seen very well in canyon country, especially at Selah Canyon

HUMMINGBIRDS:

Black-chinned Hummingbird - one male on the entrance road to Wenas Campground

Calliope Hummingbird - wonderful views of streamer-gorgeted males near Roslyn and in Swakane Canyon

Rufous Hummingbird - The perched birds in Sally and Bob's garden gave the best views; a number of others were seen in western Washington.

KINGFISHERS:

Belted Kingfisher

WOODPECKERS & ALLIES:

Lewis' Woodpecker - This beautiful woodpecker was seen best at the start of Toats Coulee Rd. west of Loomis, where we scoped a couple near their nestholes; also seen along Umtanum Rd.

Red-naped Sapsucker - Males were seen along Wenas Ck. and near Havillah.

Red-breasted Sapsucker - Although this species can be tricky to see, we had very good luck, even seeing one well in someone's front yard before we arrived at our first birding spot the first morning. We saw about six that day, and on the final full day of the tour watched one flying back and forth across the Skagit River at Newhalem.

Williamson's Sapsucker - Beginning with a male seen near Hidden Valley east of Cle Elum, we had a number of very good views of males (including one bathing in a puddle in the middle of a road!) and of one tawny, barred female.

Downy Woodpecker

Hairy Woodpecker - good examples of the grayish bellied form west of the Cascade crest and the bright white bellied form to the east

White-headed Woodpecker - This woodpecker is scarce and local in the region, and we were fortunate to have had good views of one along Wenas Creek.

American Three-toed Woodpecker (formerly Three-toed Woodpecker) - One male was seen near Havillah on our first evening in the Okanogan region. We saw another seven or eight in the Okanogan highlands among diseased spruce, and had terrific views of males on the ground showing their yellow forecrowns to best advantage.

Black-backed Woodpecker - It took a good bit of searching for this much-wanted woodpecker, but we ultimately had very nice views of a male in the Western Larch zone in the Okanogan region.

Northern Flicker - some nice studies of the "red-shafted" form

Pileated Woodpecker - a pair was seen well just west of Twisp on the final full day

FLYCATCHERS & ALLIES:

Olive-sided Flycatcher - excellent views; seen on more than half the tour days

Western Wood-Pewee - widespread

Willow Flycatcher - scoped as it sang near Tenino

Hammond's Flycatcher - heard often; seen well near Wenas and in the Okanogan

Dusky Flycatcher - good studies

Gray Flycatcher - seen and heard near Wenas Ck.

Pacific-slope Flycatcher - heard widely; seen best the first day near Tenino

Say's Phoebe - widespread in eastern Washington

Western Kingbird - the commonly seen kingbird of the tour

Eastern Kingbird - only a few seen along the road, perhaps the first migrants to reach the area

SHRIKES:

Loggerhead Shrike - A scarce bird in the area and only in sage/steppe, Stephanie spotted one near Potholes Wildlife Area.

VIREOS:

Cassin's Vireo - heard most days of the tour, seen best east of Cle Elum and in Swakane Cyn.

Hutton's Vireo - good views the first day of the tour near Tenino

Warbling Vireo - seen well repeatedly, especially coming in to pygmy-owl tooting

JAYS, MAGPIES & CROWS:

Gray Jay - Both the *obscurus* and *canadensis* forms were seen, west and east of the Cascades respectively. On several occasions we heard Gray Jays imitate Northern Pygmy-Owls, as they came in to investigate tooting.

Steller's Jay - seen in detail, right down to the pale blue "eyebrows" above the eyes

Western Scrub-Jay - common around Tenino, but seen nowhere else on the tour

Clark's Nutcracker - seen repeatedly in Swakane Canyon and all over the Okanogan

Black-billed Magpie - scope views brought out its lustrous blue tones

American Crow

Northwestern Crow

Common Raven - seen every day of the tour

LARKS:

Horned Lark - wonderful views in the open area north of Ellensburg

SWALLOWS & MARTINS:

Tree Swallow

Violet-green Swallow - we took time to check out the violet tail of this lovely swallow

Northern Rough-winged Swallow

Bank Swallow - in and out of nest holes along the Tonasket-Havillah Rd.

Cliff Swallow - On three occasions we watched with amazement as Cliff Swallows lit on the ground, their wings held fluttering above them, taking mouthfuls of mud from the edge of recent puddles to construct nests nearby. Nice view of the nests near Lincoln Park.

Barn Swallow

TITMICE through CREEPERS:

Black-capped Chickadee

Mountain Chickadee - great views on several occasions, as they came in to owl tooting

Boreal Chickadee - A scarce and local bird in the region, found only in a narrow zone in the highlands, we had excellent views of a small flock.

Chestnut-backed Chickadee - seen nicely west and east of the Cascades

Bushtit - Near Tenino we saw one of the "Brown-crowned" forms (*Psaltriparus minimus saturatus*), the common form for the state. In the Potholes area we saw adults and young of one of "Gray-crowned" forms (*P.m. plumbeus*), where it is a very rare breeder.

Red-breasted Nuthatch - seen every day of the tour, a good candidate (along with Western Tanager) for a tour mascot bird, since it seemed to turn up almost everywhere

White-breasted Nuthatch - at a few locations in Ponderosa Pines in eastern Washington

Pygmy Nuthatch - also in Ponderosa Pines, we saw these tiny western nuthatches near Wenas Ck. and along the Tonasket-Havillah Rd. in the Okanogan

Brown Creeper - excellent views on both sides of the Cascades

WRENS & DIPPERS:

Rock Wren - literally "in your face" views of a singing wren west of the Columbia River

Canyon Wren - heard several places, seen very well in the scope in Swakane Canyon

Bewick's Wren - seen around Tenino; heard in Potholes Wildlife Area

House Wren - heard frequently, seen best near Wenas Ck. and Hidden Valley

Winter Wren - seen the first day of the tour

Marsh Wren - heard

American Dipper - seen first near Quilcene, later at close range along Gold Ck. where Barbara spotted the bird at the stream's edge

KINGLETS:

Golden-crowned Kinglet - close views of males raising their brilliant crests (near Hurricane Ridge and at Lone Fir Campground just east of the Cascade Crest)

Ruby-crowned Kinglet - also seen raising its crest (near Loup Loup), and its wonderful song rang throughout the Okanogan Highlands

THRUSHES & ALLIES:

Western Bluebird - many pairs, usually near the forest edge

Mountain Bluebird - flashy, azure blue males

Townsend's Solitaire - seen well at Wenas Ck., and repeatedly in the Okanogan forests

Veery - memorable singers; nice views of cinnamon colored thrushes along Wenas Ck.

Swainson's Thrush - seen best in Olympic National Park; heard more widely

Hermit Thrush - haunting notes in the mountain forest, where also seen well

American Robin - truly ubiquitous

Varied Thrush - We were fortunate to have marvelous views of these intricately patterned thrushes in Olympic National Park and Okanogan National Forest; and their eerie song notes became familiar in high forest zones.

MIMIDS:

Gray Catbird - seen well along the Okanogan River

Sage Thrasher - singing and singing and singing from atop the sage

STARLINGS & ALLIES:

European Starling

WAXWINGS:

Cedar Waxwing - seen or heard most days of the trip

WOOD WARBLERS

Orange-crowned Warbler - encountered only the first days of the trip, and seen very well singing its distinct trill in small alder tree in Capitol Forest

Nashville Warbler - These tiny warblers were viewed in detail at several stops, including near Roslyn, at Wenas Ck., and along Swakane Canyon.

Yellow Warbler - heard most days of the trip, and seen best the first morning near Tenino

Yellow-rumped Warbler - lots of striking "Audubon's" males in the mountain conifer forests

Black-throated Gray Warbler - best view of these neatly patterned warblers was a singing male in Capitol Forest

Townsend's Warbler - terrific, eye-level views of these striking black and yellow warblers at Lone Fir Campground; also seen well along the road up to Hurricane Ridge

Hermit Warbler - another study in yellow and black, we watched a singing male in Capitol Forest

MacGillivray's Warbler - A skulker by habit, we coaxed a couple of MacGillivray's out to sing more openly, and saw them on both sides of the Cascades (Capitol Forest, Swakane Canyon, and near Chesaw).

Common Yellowthroat - heard at several marshes and wet meadows

Wilson's Warbler - good views at several spots, including the first morning near Tenino

Yellow-breasted Chat - wonderful views of chats singing atop shrubs in Swakane Canyon

TANAGERS:

Western Tanager - Beginning with the first morning of the tour, we had exceptional views of bright yellow, red-faced male tanagers every day of the trip - a fancy bird for a daily trip mascot.

SPARROWS & ALLIES:

Spotted Towhee - at least two forms, with the more heavily spotted ones east of the Cascades

Chipping Sparrow - daily in the eastern part of the state

Brewer's Sparrow - singing a magnificent set of trills in the sage

Vesper Sparrow - seen most days in the eastern part of the state

Lark Sparrow - a very distinctively marked, handsome sparrow; seen in the sage

Sage Sparrow - A Sage Sparrow perched on a fence line just a few meters from us, and stopped for scope views atop the sage too.

Savannah Sparrow

Song Sparrow - Lots of the dark *morphna* subspecies were seen in western Washington, as well as the more crisply marked *merrilli* near Chesaw in the Okanogan.

Lincoln's Sparrow - at mountain bogs in the Okanogan and North Cascades

White-crowned Sparrow - the *pugetensis* form in western Washington

Dark-eyed Junco - the "Oregon" junco was seen daily

GROSBEAKS & BUNTINGS:

Black-headed Grosbeak - seen nearly daily, often quite well

Lazuli Bunting - several breathtaking views of these flashy blue gems

BLACKBIRDS & ALLIES:

Bobolink - a number of males on a hay field along the Tonasket-Havillah Rd. in the Okanogan (this species is a very local nester in the state)

Red-winged Blackbird - another daily sight

Western Meadowlark - their loud, liquid whistles seemed to define the eastern part of the state

Yellow-headed Blackbird - beautiful, cacophonous icterids

Brewer's Blackbird - another daily sight, we paused to really to study a few iridescent males

Brown-headed Cowbird

Bullock's Oriole - These flashy, neon orange orioles seemed to make a habit of flying off into the sage to forage, then heading back to the riparian zone where they nest.

FINCHES:

Pine Grosbeak - We were quite fortunate to see one of these northern finches near Washington Pass; it's not a bird that is easy to find in the state at any season.

Purple Finch - great views at Bob and Sally's feeders

Cassin's Finch - cranberry colored males

House Finch

Red Crossbill - A number of good views of Red Crossbills were had on both sides of the state, but the very best looks were of a flock feeding on or close to the ground along a remote mountain road in the Okanogan.

Pine Siskin - seen or heard most days; seen best at Washington Pass

American Goldfinch

Evening Grosbeak - These very distinctive finches were seen well in Cle Elum and, on the final full day of the tour, at Lone Fir Campground.

OLD WORLD SPARROWS:

House Sparrow

MAMMALS, HERPS & OTHER CRITTERS:

Black Bear - A "cinnamon" colored sow with one or two yearling cubs was a quite a surprise.

Coyote - at two different spots in eastern Washington; spotted by Jan

Harbor Seal

Yellow-bellied Marmot - adults and cubs sunning on rock piles

Cascade Golden-mantled Ground-Squirrel

Townsend Ground-Squirrel – tiny ground-squirrels of the sage

Columbian Ground-Squirrel – colonies of rufous-faced burrowers in the Okanogan

Townsend Chipmunk

Yellow Pine Chipmunk

Least Chipmunk

Douglas Squirrel [Chickaree]

Red Squirrel

Snowshoe Hare - great view of a white-footed hare in the Okanogan forest

Eastern Cottontail

Muskrat

Pika - heard

Mule Deer

Blacktail Deer (most consider this a Pacific slope subspecies of Mule Deer)

Whitetail Deer

Bighorn Sheep - a group of thirteen ewes and young rams at Swakane Cyn.

Racer - the only snake seen

Pacific Chorus Frog - heard

Banana Slug

SELECTED WILDFLOWERS:

Brodiaea
Arrow-leaf Balsamroot
Prairie Lupine
Prairie Star
Bitterroot
Wild Onion (in the sage)
Trillium
Glacier Lily
Western Wallflower
Spreading Phlox
Scarlet Paintbrush
Orange Honeysuckle
Wild Strawberry
Sand Dock
Spotted Coralroot
Scarlet Gilia
Yampah
Salsify
Cat's-ear (lily)
Goatsbeard
Dalmatian Toadflax
False Solomon's Seal
Pioneer Violet
Silky Phacelia
Rock Penstemon
Squaw Currant
Marsh Marigold
Jeffrey's Shooting Star
Death Camas
Thyme-leaved Speedwell
Tall Bluebells
Pearly Everlasting

SELECTED BLOOMING SHRUBS:

Western Chokecherry (a shrub in bloom)
Red Osier/Redtwig
Bitterbrush
Mock Orange
Serviceberry