

COLORADO GROUSE

APRIL 17 – 26, 2009

LEADERS: BRIAN P. GIBBONS & KIM ECKERT

COMPILED BY: BRIAN P. GIBBONS

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Day 1, 13 Apr: Late arrival in Gunnison for most; dinner at Ol' Miner Steakhouse. Night Gunnison, CO

Day 2, 14 Apr: Morning visit to Waunita Lek for Gunnison Sage-Grouse, breakfast at hotel, birding in Monarch pass (few birds), Poncha Springs, lunch at First Street Café in Salida, post-lunch visit to Poncha Springs and drive down Arkansas River through Cañon City, dinner at Rosario's in Pueblo. Night Pueblo, CO

Day 3, 15 Apr: IL Road near Boone, Lake Meredith, Lake Henry, lunch at Boss Hogg's in La Junta, Lake Cheraw, John Martin Reservoir State Park area (Lake Hasty). Night Lamar, CO

Day 4, 16 Apr: Breakfast at Campo Cafe, birding around Campo, birding west to Carrizo Canyon, with a picnic lunch in Cottonwood Canyon. Night Lamar, CO

Day 5, 17 Apr: Morning at Lesser Prairie-Chicken lek with Dorenkamps, drive to Wray with stop at Bonny Reservoir State Park (Long-eared Owl nest), late afternoon on the Bledsoe Ranch, dinner 4th and Main in Wray (excellent). Night Wray, CO

Day 6, 18 Apr: Morning Greater Prairie-Chicken viewing on the Bledsoe Ranch, breakfast at Demi's, Wray State Fish Hatchery, Haxtun Sewage Ponds, lunch at Sterling Village Inn, afternoon birding at Crow Valley Campground (slow) and the Murphy's Pasture area of Pawnee National Grasslands; dinner at Austin's in Fort Collins. Night Fort Collins, CO

Day 7, 19 Apr: Breakfast at The Silver Grill in Ft. Collins, birding up Poudre Canyon with stops in Poudre Park and Cameron Pass, Moose Visitor Center, afternoon birding at Walden Reservoir, dinner at Moose Creek Café. Night Walden, CO

Day 8, 20 Apr: Morning visit to awesome Greater Sage-Grouse lek, breakfast at Moose Creek Café, post-breakfast birding at Walden Reservoir, afternoon birding near Hayden and along California Park Road and Twenty mile Road, dinner at Rex's in Steamboat Springs. Night Steamboat Springs, CO

Day 9, 21 Apr: Morning visit to Dusky Grouse area and Sharp-tailed Grouse lek, Muddy Creek Recreational parking area (Rabbit Ears Pass area of Routt National Forest), Green Mountain Reservoir, Lunch at Blue Moon Café in Silverthorne, successful White-tailed Ptarmigan search on Loveland Pass, late afternoon stop Genesee Park in the fog, dinner at hotel. Night Denver, CO

Day 10, 22 Apr: Departure for home

BIRD LIST (164 species)

Ross's Goose – Four late birds at Bonny
Canada Goose – Common, seen almost daily
Wood Duck – Seen in Cottonwood Canyon and Wray
Gadwall – Common, seen seven days
American Wigeon – Common, seen three days
Mallard – Common, seen daily
Blue-winged Teal – Many seen on six dates
Cinnamon Teal – Several seen on four dates
Northern Shoveler – Common, seen on six dates

Northern Pintail – A few seen on two days at Walden Reservoir
Green-winged Teal - Common, seen six days
Canvasback – Seen two days at Walden Reservoir
Redhead – Seen on two days at Walden Reservoir and once at Bonny
Ring-necked Duck – Seen on two dates Walden Reservoir
Lesser Scaup – Common, seen on four dates
Bufflehead – Small numbers seen on three dates
Common Goldeneye – A single female at Cheraw
Common Merganser – Seen in small numbers in mountain reservoirs and streams
Ruddy Duck – Common, seen three days in a variety of locations
Ring-necked Pheasant – Seen on four dates
Greater Sage-Grouse – About 35 seen, many displaying males with females wandering through
Gunnison Sage-Grouse – A very active display in the snow by more than 20 males
Dusky Grouse – A fine male strutting toward us early in the morning, California park road
WHITE-TAILED PTARMIGAN – A cooperative bird seen at 12,000 feet, Loveland Pass
Sharp-tailed Grouse – Several males displaying on the lek, stunning views of the display, several females about too
Greater Prairie-Chicken – More than 20 males put on an amazing morning display, cooing, cackling and hooting
Lesser Prairie-Chicken – Great display of several males south of Granada
Wild Turkey – Seen in Cottonwood Canyon
Scaled Quail – Fair numbers were seen, best near IL road E of Pueblo
Pied-billed Grebe – A few seen on two days
Eared Grebe – A couple at Lake Meredith and also several at Walden Reservoir and in mountains
Western Grebe – Many seen on Lake Meredith
Clark's Grebe – Several seen on Lake Meredith, great comparison with Western Grebe
American White Pelican – Seen all but one day, largest numbers at Walden reservoir
Double-crested Cormorant – Seen on a few days, most numerous at Walden
Great Blue Heron – Seen almost daily
Snowy Egret – A few seen east of Pueblo
Cattle Egret – A single bird in the flooded ballfield east of Pueblo
White-faced Ibis – Best seen at Walden Reservoir
Turkey Vulture – Seen daily
Osprey – A few singles here and there in the mountains of northern CO, an amazing group of 6 near Silverthorne
Bald Eagle – A pair at a nest near Walden
Northern Harrier – Seen on six days, small numbers
Sharp-shinned Hawk – Singles seen on three days
Cooper's Hawk – Several seen on three dates
Swainson's Hawk – Common, seen everyday, great looks at Rufous-morph birds
Red-tailed Hawk – Common and seen daily
Ferruginous Hawk – Record number 11 for the tour! Beautiful dark bird near Burlington
Rough-legged Hawk – Northeast CO and North Park, three days
Golden Eagle – Four seen on three dates
American Kestrel – Common, seen daily
Merlin – One zipped through Crested Butte and one in the grasslands of SE CO
Prairie Falcon – One bird soaring over the town of Poncha Springs
Sora – Heard only on our fruitless owl hunt
American Coot – Common and seen almost daily
Sandhill Crane – Several seen in the Steamboat and Hayden areas were, Greaters, the local nesters
Snowy Plover – Distant views of a single bird
Killdeer – Common and seen almost daily
Mountain Plover – Four birds seen along IL road east of Pueblo
Black-necked Stilt – Three seen at Cheraw
American Avocet – Seen on five days, beautiful breeding plumage
Solitary Sandpiper – Seen in southeast Colorado, a single dropped into a pond
Lesser Yellowlegs – Two at Lake Meredith
Long-billed Curlew – Several seen in the Comanche National Grassland
Marbled Godwit – Bonny and Walden Reservoirs
Western Sandpiper – A single with Least at Wray State Fish Hatchery
Least Sandpiper – Wray State Fish Hatchery and Haxtun Sewage ponds

Long-billed Dowitcher – Four seen near Lake Meredith
Wilson's Snipe – A couple seen by most folks near Walden Reservoir
Wilson's Phalarope – A few at Haxtun Sewage Ponds
Franklin's Gull – Seen three days in eastern CO
Bonaparte's Gull – A few around Lake Meredith and also a single at Walden Reservoir
Ring-billed Gull – Seen on four dates, fairly common
California Gull – Large numbers pre-nesting around Walden
Rock Pigeon – Common seen almost daily
Eurasian Collared-Dove – Since its arrival in Colorado in 1998 this species has expanded to nearly every corner!
Mourning Dove – Common, seen daily
Great Horned Owl – Best looks, including fuzzy young, at Bonny State Park
Burrowing Owl – Several seen on several dates, great looks
Long-eared Owl – A nest at Bonny State Park, decent looks at a face
White-throated Swift – Seen our first and last days
Broad-tailed Hummingbird – Glimpsed by a few folks in Poudre Park
Belted Kingfisher – A few singles and doubles on five days
Williamson's Sapsucker – A very cooperative male in Genesee Park on the last afternoon, barely visible in the fog
Red-naped Sapsucker – A few in Poncha Springs also seen in Poudre Park
Downy Woodpecker – Two singles seen
Hairy Woodpecker – Three singles seen on three days
American Three-toed Woodpecker – A cooperative male in Roosevelt National Forest
Northern Flicker – Common Seen almost daily, yellow-shafted and red-shafted forms seen
Eastern Phoebe – Three seen, eastern CO
Say's Phoebe – Several seen on several dates
Western Kingbird – Several seen in eastern CO
Loggerhead Shrike – Several seen on the eastern plains and a few in the mountains
Gray Jay – Moose Visitor Center
Steller's Jay – Seen on four dates
Blue Jay – A couple glimpsed in SE CO
Pinyon Jay – Poncha Springs, great looks!
Clark's Nutcracker – Two birds in Poncha Springs
Black-billed Magpie – Our *Pica hudsonia* now split from Old World Magpie (*Pica pica*), four days
American Crow – Seen on four days
Chihuahuan Raven – Several seen, all in extreme southeast Colorado
Common Raven – Common, seen most days in the mountains
Horned Lark – Abundant out on the plains, seen daily
Tree Swallow – Seen in the mountains on five dates around Gunnison, Walden and Steamboat
Violet-Green Swallow – Several at a stop in Poudre Park, high overhead
Northern Rough-winged Swallow – A few seen in eastern CO
Bank Swallow – One seen in Walden area
Cliff Swallow – Seen in southeast Colorado
Barn Swallow – Common, seen almost daily
Black-capped Chickadee – Seen on three days in the mountains
Mountain Chickadee – Fairly common in mountains
Juniper Titmouse – One bird came in hard to get looks at it, west of Pueblo
Bushtit – A few in Cottonwood Canyon
Pygmy Nuthatch – Several seen in the Genesee Park area
Rock Wren – Several seen in Cottonwood Canyon
Canyon Wren – One seen well in Cottonwood Canyon
Bewick's Wren – Cottonwood Canyon, a couple seen and heard
American Dipper – Seen along the Gunnison River, Arkansas River and in Poudre Canyon
Golden-crowned Kinglet – A single bird at Muddy Creek Recreational area Routt National Forest
Ruby-crowned Kinglet – A single at Wray State Fish Hatchery
Blue-gray Gnatcatcher – A couple seen in Cottonwood Canyon
Eastern Bluebird – A nice male at Wray State Fish Hatchery
Western Bluebird – Good looks in Poncha Springs and IL RD our first couple of days
Mountain Bluebird – Great looks at this stunner, especially around Walden
Townsend's Solitaire – A couple singles seen

American Robin – Common, seen daily
Northern Mockingbird – A couple seen in SE CO
Sage Thrasher – Seen in eastern CO
Curve-billed Thrasher – Seen near the small town of Boone in SE CO
European Starling – Seen daily, unfortunately
American Pipit – A single at Pawnee National Grassland
Yellow-rumped Warbler – We saw a few on three days
Spotted Towhee – Several seen on three dates
Canyon Towhee – A couple seen on the plains near Boone also in Cottonwood Canyon
Cassin's Sparrow – Seen in Comanche National Grassland
Rufous-crowned Sparrow – One in Cottonwood Canyon was seen well in the scope
Chipping Sparrow – Several birds seen on three days
Brewer's Sparrow – Seen on the southeast plains near Boone
Vesper Sparrow – Common, especially out on the eastern plains
Lark Sparrow – Several birds in southeast CO
Lark Bunting – Several early birds near Campo
Grasshopper Sparrow – Great looks at the Lesser Prairie-Chicken lek
White-crowned Sparrow – Common, seen almost daily
Dark-eyed Junco – Seen almost daily; Oregon, pink-sided and “**Gray-headed**” types (subspecies *caniceps*)
McCown's Longspur – We saw fifty-plus on the Pawnee NG including some giving their flight display song
Chestnut-collared Longspur – It took some effort, but we saw them on the Pawnee NG, beautiful breeding birds
Red-winged Blackbird – Common, seen daily
Western Meadowlark – Common and seen daily, but beautiful visually and aurally
Yellow-headed Blackbird – We had great looks near Lake Meredith and Walden reservoir
Brewer's Blackbird – A few seen here and there
Common Grackle – Seen almost daily, subspecies *versicolor*
Great-tailed Grackle – Several seen in southeast Colorado
Brown-headed Cowbird – Seen on a few days the southeast part of the state
Gray-crowned Rosy-Finch – Moose Visitor Center
Black Rosy-Finch – A single bird at Moose Visitor Center feeders
Brown-capped Rosy-Finch – Crested Butte first also seen at Moose Visitor Center
Pine Grosbeak – Wonderful looks at these birds at the Moose Visitor Center, these were of the Rocky Mountain subspecies *montanus*, which has extensively gray flanks and belly.
Cassin's Finch – Seen on two days in the mountains, great looks at Moose Visitor Center
House Finch – Common and seen almost daily
White-winged Crossbill – A great male singing at Muddy Creek Recreational area Routt National Forest
Pine Siskin – Seen many days all over the state
American Goldfinch – Seen on a few days
House Sparrow – Seen daily

MAMMALS (22 species)

Gunnison area = Gu; southeast = SE; northeast = NE; mountains = Mtns (including valleys at Walden and Steamboat)

White-tailed Jackrabbit – Mtns
Desert Cottontail - SE
Mountain Cottontail - Mtns
Gunnison Prairie-Dog - Gu
Black-tailed Prairie-Dog - SE, NE
White-tailed Prairie-Dog – North Park
Least Chipmunk - Mtns
Wyoming Ground-Squirrel - Gu , Mtns (recent split from Richardson's Ground-Squirrel)
Thirteen-lined Ground-Squirrel - NE
Rock Squirrel - SE (Cottonwood Canyon)
Eastern Fox Squirrel - SE, NE, Mtns
Abert's Squirrel - Mtns
Golden-mantled Ground-Squirrel - Mtns

Muskrat - Mtns
Porcupine - Mtns
Swift Fox - NE
Coyote - Gu
Mule Deer - SE, Mtns
White-tailed Deer – SE
Pronghorn - SE, NE, Mtns
Elk - Mtns
Bighorn Sheep – SC and Georgetown on I-70

REPTILES and AMPHIBIANS

Boreal Chorus Frog - Walden and Steamboat Springs
Western Fence Lizard - SE