

Birds of the Umatilla National Forest



Yellow Warbler by Dave Herr

The Umatilla National Forest encompasses about 1.4 million acres ranging in elevation from about 1,900 feet to over 7,000 feet in the Vinegar Hills Indian Rock Scenic Area in the southeastern corner of the Forest. Opportunities to observe birds are limitless, and with time and some patience you can have a very rewarding experience. To date there have been 214 species of birds observed on the Forest. The enclosed list is a record of birds observed on the Umatilla National Forest.

Interstate I-84 roughly divides the Forest into two distinct areas; - the north half is generally wetter with deep incised valleys and is home for many bird species commonly associated with the Rocky Mountains. The south half is generally dryer with flat to rolling topography and is host to many species associated with the Great Basin.

Habitat is the key to the diversity of birds on the Forest. The Forest contains coniferous forests of Ponderosa pine, Grand fir, Douglas fir, Subalpine fir, Engelmann spruce, Lodgepole pine, Western larch, and western-white pine. The lower elevations primarily consist of Ponderosa pine and Idaho fescue and blue bunch wheatgrass grasslands. Mid elevation habitats consist of mixed stands of Grand fir, Douglas fir, Lodge pole pine, and Western larch. Above 5,000 feet there are stands of subalpine fir, Engelmann spruce and shallow meadows filled with delicate grasses and forbs. There are large wet meadow complexes filled with sedges, False hellborne, Aspen and Cottonwoods. The creeks and streams on the Forest are lined with Rocky Mountain maple, alder, dogwood, and willows.

Dry meadows also occur throughout the Forest consisting of sage, bunchgrass, and shrubs. Stands of Mountain mahogany, ceanothus, and Western juniper also occur on dryer sites. There are few small lakes and reservoirs greater than 5 acres. Vertical basalt rims above the Grande Ronde, John Day, Umatilla, and Walla Walla Rivers provide nesting opportunities for many species of birds. Habitats with large dead trees or snags are vital nesting and roosting sites for many species of birds across the Forest.

Large numbers of birds pass through the Forest during migration and are often found feeding in the high elevation meadows.

Thousands of raptors also move south along the western slope of the northern Blue Mountains and many of the interior valleys starting in mid-August. Some good birding areas on the Forest include, Jubilee lake, Olive lake, Desolation Creek Meadow, Skyline Drive (FSRD64), Upper Jones Canyon (FSRD 2104) Battle Mountain, Teal Springs Campground area, Summit Road (FSRD 31) Misery Mountain, and Table Rock to name a few.

In early spring, many forest roads are closed due to snowdrifts or muddy conditions. Please limit your travel to drier roadways on the Forest. Check with local Forest offices in Pomeroy, Walla Walla, Pendleton, Ukiah, and Heppner for the status of road conditions.

If you observe a bird species not on the list, please document and report your sighting with a photo or sketch and relevant notes including the date, time, location, name of observer (s) and a way to contact you. Send or report your sighting to the local Forest Office. Addresses and phone numbers are available on the back of this pamphlet.



Clockwise: Red Crossbill, Clark's Nutcracker, Black-backed Woodpecker, American Kestrel, and Mountain Bluebird. Photos by Dave Herr and Mike Denny

The Wildlife Watchers Code of Ethics

- 1 Respect wildlife and wildlife habitat
- 1 Respect other wildlife viewers and property
- 1 Respect the "wildness" of wildlife

Observe animals from a safe distance for us and for them:

- 1 Use binoculars, spotting scopes and viewing blinds for a close look
- 1 Move slowly and quietly
- 1 Avoid nests and dens. Leave baby birds and other animals where they are found
- 1 Learn to recognize and respect wildlife alarm signals
- 1 When an animal changes behavior as a result of our presence, we are too close

Allow wild animals to forage for their natural foods:

- 1 Put safety and health of wildlife first by resisting the impulse to feed them

Always be considerate:

- 1 Ask permission to watch or photograph wildlife on private land
- 1 Observe all rules and regulations
- 1 Wait your turn to view or photograph animals when sharing a viewing area
- 1 Leave pets at home or in the car
- 1 Tread lightly, staying on trails and roads
- 1 Pack garbage in. Pack garbage out. Do not litter, pack your garbage with you and dispose of it properly when you leave a natural area

Return a gift to nature; stay involved

- 1 Consult with your local wildlife agency for specific guidelines on ethical wildlife watching, filming and photography
- 1 Participate in wildlife and habitat conservation
- 1 Help others to become responsible wildlife watchers



Umatilla National Forest

Supervisor's Office
2517 S.W. Hailey Avenue
Pendleton, Oregon 97801
(541) 278-3716

Heppner Ranger District
117 South Main Street
Heppner, Oregon 97836
(541) 676-9187

Pomeroy Ranger District
71 West Main Street
Pomeroy, WA 99347
(509) 843-1891

**North Fork John Day
Ranger District**
Highway 244
Ukiah, Oregon 97880
(541) 427-3231

**Walla Walla
Ranger District**
1415 West Rose Street
Walla Walla, WA 99362
(509) 522-6290

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in all its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, gender, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, and marital or family status. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs.) Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication of program information (Braille, large print, audiotape, etc.) should contact USDA's TARGET Center at 202-720-2600 (voice and TDD). To file a complaint of discrimination, write USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, Room 326-W, Whitten Building, 14th and Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20250-9410 or call (202) 720-5964 (voice or TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

F14-SO-08-03

Birds of the Umatilla National Forest



Boreal Owl - Merry Lynn Denny

