



## 2022 FALL BIRDATHON REPORT

Due to unforeseen circumstances, we conducted our annual Birdathon for the first time in the fall rather than the spring this year. Overall, 126 species were recorded by our staff and board, including some relatively uncommon findings. Given the challenge of the fall, we decided to divide and conquer – splitting up the team to cover as much ground as possible. The rules were still followed – same 24-hour period for everyone and only in Montana. By splitting up, we were able to explore beyond our two office locations in Helena and Billings to include the Madison Valley, Bitterroot, Lewistown, and Glacier areas. As a result, this 24-hour effort documented a good representation of bird life across a large swath of Big Sky Country!

Given this was a fall Birdathon, paying close attention to lakes and ponds was essential for waterfowl and shorebirds. Off the buzzer we were at the bottom edge of Canyon Ferry Lake to pick up some fall shorebirds like **Baird's** and **Pectoral Sandpipers**. Then we headed up to the Elkhorn Mountains where we found a **Pileated Woodpecker**, **Mountain Bluebird**, **Red-naped Sapsucker** plus an unexpected sighting of a **Northern Goshawk**!

Birding the Helena Area included such hot spots as Kmart Ponds, Lake Helena WMA, and the Helena Regulating Reservoir. The highlight for this area was seeing an adult **Prairie Falcon** with a bird in its talons and not long after that, a **Peregrine Falcon** hunting just south of Lake Helena WMA - two beautiful adult falcons within an hour of each other! The day was topped off with a late flock of seven **White-throated Swifts** foraging very low to the ground during a passing rainstorm near the Lake Helena WMA parking lot.

Birding Billings included Riverfront Park and Shiloh Conservation Area, highlighted by a **Solitary Sandpiper** feeding in a small marsh at Riverfront Park. In the Bitterroot, we picked up some specialties for this area including **California Quail** and **Lewis's Woodpecker**. A trip to Glacier was rewarded with a rare encounter of a flock of **Gray-Crowned Rosy Finches** on the Hidden Lake trail (maybe a first for Birdathon!) and ended with a trip to Columbia Falls City Park where at least five **Blue Jays** were seen "jeer"-ing all over the neighborhood! Rounding out the list included a **Dusky Grouse** in the Missoula area, a **Golden Eagle** in the Lewistown area, and a **Pinyon Jay** in Southwest Montana.

Please see the back for a full detailed list of all **126 bird species** we documented in 24-hours this year. In 2023 we will be back to the spring (regular) schedule so we hope to have greater success as every bird counts! Thank you so much for supporting our 2022 Birdathon. We look forward to keeping you informed of our organization's conservation successes and how your generous donation supported our work.

## Montana Audubon's 2022 Fall Birdathon List

### Geese, Ducks & Allies

Canada Goose  
Snow Goose  
Trumpeter Swan  
Green-winged Teal  
Blue-winged Teal  
Bufflehead  
Wood Duck  
American Wigeon  
Mallard  
Gadwall  
Northern Shoveler  
Ring-necked Duck  
Ruddy Duck  
Hooded Merganser

### Pheasants, Grouse, & Allies

Ring-necked Pheasant  
California Quail  
Dusky Grouse  
Ruffed Grouse  
Wild Turkey

### Grebes

Eared Grebe  
Pied-billed Grebe

### Pigeons & Doves

Eurasian-Collared Dove  
Mourning Dove  
Rock Pigeon

### Swifts

White-throated Swift

### Coots & Cranes

American Coot  
Sandhill Crane

### Gulls, Terns & Shorebirds

California Gull  
Franklin's Gull  
Ring-billed Gull  
Baird's Sandpiper  
Killdeer  
Pectoral Sandpiper  
Solitary Sandpiper  
Spotted Sandpiper  
Wilson's Snipe

### Loons & Cormorants

Common Loon  
Double-crested Cormorant  
  
Pelicans & Herons  
American White Pelican  
Great Blue Heron  
  
Vultures  
Turkey Vulture

### Hawks & Allies

Bald Eagle  
Golden Eagle  
Red-tailed Hawk  
Swainson's Hawk  
Sharp-shinned Hawk  
Cooper's Hawk  
Northern Goshawk  
Northern Harrier  
Osprey

### Owls

Great Horned Owl

### Kingfishers

Belted Kingfisher

### Woodpeckers

Downy Woodpecker  
Hairy Woodpecker  
Pileated Woodpecker  
Lewis's Woodpecker  
Red-naped Sapsucker  
Northern Flicker  
(red-shafted)

### Falcons

American Kestrel  
Merlin  
Peregrine Falcon  
Prairie Falcon

### Flycatchers

Western Wood-Pewee  
Western Kingbird  
Say's Phoebe

### Vireos

Cassin's Vireo

### Jays & Crows

Black-billed Magpie  
Blue Jay  
Pinyon Jay  
Steller's Jay  
Clark's Nutcracker  
American Crow  
Common Raven

### Chickadees

Black-capped Chickadee  
Mountain Chickadee

### Larks & Swallows

Horned Lark  
Barn Swallow  
Cliff Swallow  
Violet-green Swallow

### Kinglets, Waxwings & Nuthatches

Golden-crowned Kinglet  
Ruby-crowned Kinglet  
Cedar Waxwing  
Pygmy Nuthatch  
Red-breasted Nuthatch  
White-breasted Nuthatch

### Wrens

Marsh Wren  
House Wren

### Mimics, Starlings & Dippers

Gray Catbird  
Sage Thrasher  
European Starling  
American Dipper

### Thrushes

American Robin  
Mountain Bluebird  
Townsend's Solitaire  
Swainson's Thrush

### Passeridae Family

House Sparrow

### Pipits

American Pipit

### Finches

House Finch  
Evening Grosbeak  
Gray-crowned Rosy-Finch  
Pine Siskin  
Red Crossbill  
American Goldfinch

### Sparrows, Towhees, & Juncos

Chipping Sparrow  
Clay-colored Sparrow  
Lincoln's Sparrow  
Savannah Sparrow  
Song Sparrow  
Vesper Sparrow  
White-crowned Sparrow  
American Tree Sparrow  
Spotted Towhee  
Dark-eyed Junco

### Blackbirds & Meadowlarks

Brewer's Blackbird  
Brown-headed Cowbird  
Red-winged Blackbird  
Common Grackle  
Western Meadowlark

### Wood Warblers

Common Yellowthroat  
Yellow Warbler  
Yellow-rumped Warbler  
Wilson's Warbler  
Nashville Warbler  
Orange-crowned Warbler

### Tanagers & Buntings

Western Tanager  
Lazuli Bunting

**Total: 126 Species!**