

Dear fabulous volunteers,

I just finished going through the 51 reports you submitted between 20 May and 5 July, and I remain impressed by the quality of the reporting--fantastic details and narratives. The story of the heroic efforts of the Little Dry Creek harriers to protect their nests and defend their young from coyotes and red-tailed hawks would make a great script for a nature film.

As many of you know by now, **the northern harrier nest in the Little Dry Creek Wetland 80-100 m west of N. 51st St. failed** on 7 June, after several volunteers saw the adults repeatedly divebombing coyotes close to the nest. Gary Rouborn apparently witnessed the actual depredation of the young after he saw the female divebombing the coyotes at the nest site for 2.5 hours before finally giving up, apparently exhausted. No harrier activity was observed at or around this nest site after that date.

In contrast, the new northern harrier nest on the Boulder Open Space and Mountain Parks Boulder Valley Ranch property west of the small pond appears to have fledged four young, despite persistent efforts by coyotes to make off with them. On 5 July Gary reported seeing seven harriers perched on the ground around the pond in the wetland: four young, one adult male, and two adult females. John Dietrich observed two male harriers in this area, along with an adult female and two fledglings on 28 June. So it could be that the pair whose Little Dry Creek nest failed on June 7 is spending some time with the family who nested just a half-mile or so west of them.

The story with the osprey is somewhat similar. **For the fifth consecutive year, the Dry Creek osprey nest failed.** This had been our most successful nest site in Boulder County from 2004-10, fledging 20 young during those 7 years, but obviously something changed--perhaps the death of the original female or perhaps aging of the original female--to render this site nonproductive. This year, multiple observers reported an osprey incubating on the nest from 5 May-28 June, before finally giving up the ghost. Its mate left the area about that same time (by the way, most of you have been using the default "female" to describe incubating ospreys; I'll check the literature, but I believe that both sexes share in incubation). Many of us are expecting this nest to become productive next year, after witnessing the diligence of this year's pair (and assuming this is a young female).

The Little Dry Creek osprey nest, however, was successful for the third year of the last four, fledging one or two young around 5 July (still waiting for your most recent observations).

This has been one of our best years for American bitterns, with at least two and possibly three territories observed within the Little Dry Creek marsh, two territories observed within the Dry Creek marsh, and--pay close attention everyone--possibly three territories located within the Coot Lake marsh! That's right, on 27 June, Stu and Yvonne Bader heard bitterns calling in that marsh from three disparate locations.

This observation repeats the pattern we've observed over the years, with no bitterns seen or heard west of Coot Lake in April or May, but individuals showing up almost every year in June. Could these be fledglings from other sites? I doubt it, especially as we've observed nesting behaviors in this marsh and even one family years ago. Maybe these tend to be territorial males who couldn't attract females in other more favorable nesting marshes. It's a big mystery, but all of you who are doing Coot Lake, please try to get out very early in the morning throughout the rest of July and see if you can find fledged bitterns.

No burrowing owls have been reported by anyone around Boulder Reservoir. So far this summer, I know of four nests in Boulder County: two on Boulder Open Space, one on Louisville open space, and one on Boulder County open space south of Longmont. I lead a fundraising burrowing owl trip to the Barr Lake area for Boulder County Audubon a couple of weeks ago, and we saw 35 or more burrowing owls. For those of you who'd like to schedule your own foray, the two best sites were Trussville and 114th, just north of DIA, where there was a family of eight close to the road; and Quency Street, south off 112th, where we observed at least five families.

Many of you have been reporting other bird observations around the reservoir, and here are the lists for you to add to or edit. We're particularly interesting in confirming nesting, so if you've seen any nesting or territorial behaviors other than the ones noted please send them along to me. Also, of course, any species you've observed that aren't on the lists. I strongly recommend you print out the list for your area, so you can practice identifying these particular species prior to next year. And if you haven't

already, I would strongly recommend you upload I-Bird or the Sibley Birds of Western North America app to your cell phone (they cost about \$15 apiece), so you can review the songs of these various species.

Other interesting sightings May-July include 30+ white-faced ibis in the Dry Creek drainage on 7 May and multiple bald eagle observations over Coot Lake, Dry Creek, and Little Dry Creek. I think it's likely that both these species could nest within the study area in future years. Several of you also reported seeing two white-tailed deer in the Little Dry Creek wetland. This is good habitat for them, and they've been in the area for several decades, but they are more reclusive than our local mule deer and it's always exhilarating to see them.

I guess that's all I have for now, but thanks again for the wonderful reports. We've exceeded all previous records for volunteer hours, and the quality of the reporting has been first-rate throughout. I'll send out a final summary before our get-together in late August.

Steve Jones

Observers reporting: George Alexander, Sharon Anderson, Linda Andes-Georges, Stu and Yvonne Bader, Ginger Beske, Barbara Brandt, John Dietrich, Carol Dozier, Haylen Gregory, Greg Holden, Shirley Jin, Kumiko Iwata, Chuck Klomp, Viki Lawrence, Melissa Lester, Liz Litkowski, Nancy Ries Morrison, Kitty Noonan, Mike Patterson, Jeanine Pow, George Rosborough, Linda Palmer, Gary Raybourn, Gretchen and Peter Ridgeway, Mary Sandmann, Robin Youngelman.

Coot Lake Birds

1. American Bittern
2. American Crow
3. American Goldfinch
4. American Robin (pair)
5. American White Pelican
6. Barn Swallow
7. Belted Kingfisher
8. Black-capped Chickadee
9. Blue Grosbeak
10. Blue Jay
11. Brewer's Blackbird (pair)
12. Brown-headed Cowbird
13. Bullock's Oriole (pair)
14. Cackling Goose
15. Canada Goose
16. Cinnamon Teal
17. Cliff Swallow
18. Common Grackle (pair)
19. Common Yellowthroat (pair)
20. Double-crested Cormorant
21. Downy Woodpecker (territory)
22. Eastern Kingbird (pair)
23. Eurasian Collared-Dove
24. European Starling
25. Great Blue Heron
26. Great Horned Owl (pair)
27. House Finch
28. House Wren (pair)
29. Killdeer
30. Mallard
31. Mourning Dove (pair)
32. Northern Flicker
33. Northern Shoveler
34. Osprey
35. Pied-billed Grebe
36. Red-tailed Hawk
37. Red-winged Blackbird (pair)
38. Song Sparrow (pair)
39. Sora (territory)
40. Turkey Vulture
41. Western Grebe
42. Western Kingbird (pair)
43. Western Meadowlark (pair)
44. Wilson's Snipe
45. Yellow Warbler (pair)

Dry Creek Birds

1. American Coot
2. American Kestrel
3. American White Pelican
4. Black-billed Magpie
5. Blue Grosbeak (singing male)
6. Bullock's Oriole (singing male)
7. Canada Goose
8. Common Grackle (pair)
9. Common Merganser
10. Common Raven
11. Common Yellowthroat (singing male)
12. Double-Crested Cormorant
13. Eastern Kingbird (territory)
14. Eurasian Collared-Dove
15. European Starling
16. Great Blue Heron (multiple nests with young)
17. Great Horned Owl
18. Hummingbird species
19. Killdeer (territory)
20. Mallard (pair)
21. Northern Flicker
22. Northern Shoveler
23. Osprey (nest with eggs)
24. Red-tailed Hawk (nest with 3 young)
25. Red-winged Blackbird (territory)
26. Song Sparrow (singing male)
27. Turkey Vulture
28. Western Kingbird (territory)
29. Western Meadowlark (territory)
30. White-faced Ibis (30, 7 May)
31. Wilson's Snipe
32. Yellow Warbler (singing male)

Little Dry Creek Birds

1. American Kestrel
2. American White Pelican
3. Bald Eagle (two adults)
4. Barn Swallow
5. Belted Kingfisher
6. Black-billed Magpie
7. Blue-winged Teal (pair)
8. Bullock's Oriole (singing male)
9. Canada Goose (pair)
10. Cliff Swallow
11. Common Grackle
12. Common Raven
13. Common Yellowthroat (territory)
14. Double-crested Cormorant
15. Eastern Kingbird
16. Eurasian Collared-Dove (territory)
17. Great Blue Heron
18. Great Horned Owl
19. Killdeer (territory)
20. Mallard (courtship)
21. Northern Flicker
22. Northern Harrier (nest with young failed)
23. Osprey (nest with young)
24. Red-tailed Hawk
25. Red-winged Blackbird (territory)
26. Song Sparrow (territory)
27. Sora
28. Tree Swallow (occupied nest)
29. Turkey Vulture
30. Vesper Sparrow (singing male)
31. Virginia Rail
32. Western Grebe
33. Western Kingbird (occupied nest)
34. Western Meadowlark (territory)
35. White-throated Swift (observed non-breeder)
36. Wilson's Snipe (territory)
37. Yellow Warbler (territory)