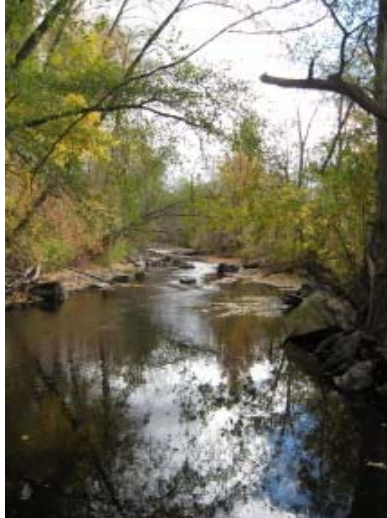


Birds at North Mountain Park: Occurrence, Seasonality and Numbers over a 10 Year Period – 9/1999 through 8/2009

Barbara W. Massey



North Mountain Park in
Spring



and in Winter

Introduction

Monitoring of birds in North Mountain Park (NMP) began in September 1999 when I started gathering data for a book on Rogue Valley birds. The plan for the book was to monitor 20 sites in the valley and its surrounding highlands monthly for two years; the result was a database that showed avian distribution, seasonality and abundance in our region. The book, “Guide to Birds of the Rogue Valley”, was co-authored by Dennis Vroman, and published in 2003.

When monitoring for the book ended, Linda Chesney was eager to have it continue at NMP for as long as possible. So Vince Zauskey, Bob Quaccia, Eric Setterberg and I volunteered to share monitoring and have continued faithfully since. A total of 115 monthly counts spanned the 10 years (5 counts were missed due to oversight). Now, 10 years later, a summary is in order. In addition to the monthly counts a clipboard for daily sightings of unusual species is kept at the visitor center, and I went through it to find

reputable sightings by knowledgeable birders and added them to the database. There were some bemusing items on the list, particularly in the early years, like Red Warbler, Red-headed Woodpecker, Yellow Finch, Piñon Jay, Wood Thrush, Nude Streaker-very cute, and Wild Human Baby. There has been a noticeable improvement in the caliber of the sightings in the past few years - either birders are getting better or better birders are visiting the park on a regular basis, and probably both.

I would like to thank Linda Chesney for her input, her long experience and sharp memory have been invaluable. I am also most grateful to Gwyneth Ragosine for assembling this report as a pdf file.

North Mountain Park in 1999

When the counts started in 1999, the visitor center was being remodeled, the gardens were being laid out, and the ball fields, stream and ponds were under construction. Invasive weeds were rampant. By the fall of 2001 many changes had occurred; the visitor center and the ball fields were completed, restoration of native plants had begun (and is ongoing) and we had done two years of bird monitoring. We had a good grasp on seasonality and abundance, and many nesting species had been identified. No further structural changes took place after the ball fields and their accompanying buildings were completed. However, a housing tract consuming many acres of open land across Mountain Avenue was developed in 2005, and loss of this habitat plus the introduction of local cats into the picture affected several bird species.

Types of bird use

Table 1 lists all species seen in the park in the past 10 years and indicates type of occurrence and relative abundance. The species accounts section elaborates further on occurrence. Generally, 3 broad categories are used, with sub-sections under each.

Resident: Birds that live in the park, of which most have been documented as breeding.

Visitor: Usually local residents that appear occasionally, but sometimes are rare off-course birds e.g. Snow Bunting.

Migrant: there are 3 categories

- 1) Neo-tropical birds that breed in the park and are only here May-August. e.g. Western Wood-Pewee, Black-headed Grosbeak.
- 2) Species that come to winter. e.g. Dark-eyed Junco, Golden-crowned Sparrow.
- 3) Birds in transit (spring/fall) to either their breeding or wintering grounds, e.g. Willow Flycatcher, Warbling Vireo.

A few migrants that breed in the valley but not in the park are also seen occasionally here in summer, e.g. Common Nighthawk, Rufous Hummingbird.

Changes in Species

By 2001, a total of 91 species had been seen. Since then 40 new species have been added, bringing the total to 131 species. Table I lists all species and indicates type of occurrence and relative abundance. One bird has almost disappeared from the park -

the Ring-necked Pheasant. It is a bird of the fields and needs tall grasses and low shrubs. It was formerly in the area where the ball fields now are, but little of its preferred habitat is left. California Quail and Western Meadowlark are also declining, presumably for the same reason.

Most of the added species have been occasional visitors, and many were single sightings. The park's birdlife is in a fairly stable state, as the core area has not been changed except to improve it. Although a few increases and decreases in numbers and/or occurrence of species have been noted below, the changes are too limited to be statistically significant.

Species seen most regularly

NMP is a pleasure for birders in all seasons. Listed below are the species that are easiest to see all year, plus those that are seen regularly in the proper season. The number of sightings is appended to each species.

Residents – all year

Western scrub-Jay – 115
European Starling – 111
Song Sparrow – 107
Spotted Towhee – 103
Northern Flicker – 101
Red-winged Blackbird - 100
Mallard – 101
Black-capped Chickadee - 90
Lesser Goldfinch – 89
American Robin – 88
Mourning Dove - 80
House Finch – 78
American Crow – 77
Brewer's Blackbird - 76
Killdeer - 70
Acorn Woodpecker - 56
Downy Woodpecker – 52
California Quail - 53
American Goldfinch – 53
Wood Duck - 48
Dark-eyed Junco – 47
Belted Kingfisher - 46
Wrentit - 46
Great Blue Heron – 43
Canada Goose - 43
Cedar Waxwing - 43
Black Phoebe – 40
Anna's Hummingbird – 35

White-breasted Nuthatch – 35
Bewick's Wren - 35
House Sparrow - 35
Wintering birds
Golden Crowned Sparrow – 77
White-crowned Sparrow – 56
Ruby-crowned Kinglet – 38
Fox Sparrow – 35
Summer breeders
Tree Swallow - 45
Western Wood-Pee-wee – 37
Western Kingbird – 29
Green Heron - 27
Bullock's Oriole – 26

Seasonal species

Winter: Species that arrive in the fall and stay the winter here but leave in spring to breed elsewhere include most of the waterfowl, Raven, Ruby-crowned Kinglet, Hermit Thrush, Fox Sparrow, Lincoln's Sparrow, White- and Golden-crowned Sparrow and Dark-eyed Junco. They appear occasionally, or for a short time, during the cold months.

Summer: Neotropical migrants that come to the park to breed are Western Wood-Pewee, Tree Swallow, Barn Swallow, Black-headed Grosbeak, House Wren, Yellow-breasted Chat and Bullock's Oriole.

Spring/fall: Neotropical migrants that do not breed in the park, but are seen *en route* to or from their breeding grounds including most flycatchers, two of the 3 vireos, and all warblers except the chat.

Breeding birds

Most of the residents have been documented as breeders. The few exceptions, e.g. American Crow and Cedar Waxwing, breed locally and could easily do so in the park. The neo-tropical migrants listed above return annually and often nest in the same locations. A few species such as Wrentit and Brewer's Blackbird, which were not documented by field observations, were verified as nesters by Klamath Bird Observatory banders when brood patches or cloacal protuberances were found during banding sessions.

A small Great Blue Heron rookery lasted 3 seasons and had 3 nesting pairs when it was abandoned (see Species Accounts). Rookeries in the valley are often short-lived for similar reasons.

Species Accounts

This section contains a brief summary of the 131 species that have been seen in NMP from September 1999 through August 2009. Data are from 115 monthly counts, augmented by selected sightings from birders that were posted on the bulletin board at the visitor center. To report the status of species in the Rogue Valley I used "Guide to Birds of the Rogue Valley" by Massey and Vroman, and "Birds of Jackson County", a publication of Rogue Valley Audubon Society. John Alexander provided data on breeding birds caught by Klamath Bird Observatory personnel at the NMP banding station from 2006-2008 (brood patch and/or cloacal protuberance were the indicators). For more than a decade the station was run by Gail Rible; for the past few years by a banding group from KBO.

The summaries include:

Status: Type of use at NMP and the Rogue Valley - status in bold type indicates use at NMP.

Resident: present all year and usually a breeding bird. Exceptions are species like Canada Goose, Cedar Waxwing and Purple Finch that are local residents for all months except the breeding months of June/July. These are categorized as visitors, with explanation.

Migrant: Transients present in spring and fall while *en route* to and from nesting grounds farther north or higher altitudes. Wintering birds that arrive in fall and stay through the winter e.g. White-crowned and Golden-crowned Sparrow. Summer breeding

birds that winter in southern U.S. and/or Central America and are here only for the nesting season e.g. Black-headed Grosbeak, Bullock's Oriole.

Visitor: Birds that use the park irregularly or seasonally like Common Merganser or Sharp-shinned Hawk, and those that are occasional or rare drop-ins like Snow Bunting or Evening Grosbeak. If helpful, the kind of visitation is noted, like 'occasional winter', or 'rare and out-of-range'.

Occurrence: number of times seen at NMP, range in number of individuals on a count, season of use.

Common: seen on at least 75 of the 115 counts

Fairly common: seen on more than 50 but less than 75 counts

Uncommon: seen on 10 to 50 counts

Rare: seen on fewer than 10 counts

Regular/irregular: reliably present in the proper season (e.g. breeding or wintering), or erratic in occurrence.

Breeding status: categories are 'documented, presumed, probable, possible or nonbreeding'.

Remarks: observations of unusual occurrences taken on the counts or from the bulletin board.

The species:

Pied billed Grebe Common resident of the Rogue Valley, rare winter **visitor** to NMP. Seen twice in the big pond, in November 2004 and January 2007.

Double-crested Cormorant Uncommon resident of the Rogue Valley; rare **visitor** to NMP. Seen once in May 2003.

Great Blue Heron Common resident of the Rogue Valley, uncommon summer **visitor/breeding bird** in NMP. First seen 2/2000, seen every year since, mostly in spring; 1-4 seen on 43 counts. A small rookery was established in the riparian woodland in 2001 when a pair nested in a large cottonwood. By 2002 a second pair was nesting in the same part of the tree and there were two in 2003-2004. In 2005 a 3rd pair started building in February but abandoned. A dead adult was found below a nest in May 2006. In 2007 3 birds started nests but abandoned; a Great-horned Owl nested in a nearby tree and there is presumably a connection between the herons' abandonment and the arrival of the owls. In 2008/2009 single birds were seen several times, and not in the breeding season.

Great Egret Winter resident in Rogue Valley's wetlands, but a rare **visitor** to NMP. Single birds seen 4 times in winter.

Green Heron Uncommon migrant and summer breeding bird in the Rogue Valley, summer **breeding bird** in NMP. First seen 5/2000; 1-7 seen 27 times from May through September. Nesting first observed in 2002 when 3 juveniles were seen with parents in July. One juvenile was observed in August 2008, and presumably nesting has occurred in the intermediate years.

Turkey Vulture A summer breeding bird in Oregon; an uncommon **visitor** to NMP during migration and in summer. First seen 4/2000, 1-500 on 38 counts (500 moving slowly south in October), usually overhead, occasionally roosting at night (e.g. 3 in March 2007).

Canada Goose Widespread resident of the Rogue Valley, regular winter **visitor** to NMP. First seen 12/1999, 1-24 seen on 43 counts from August - April. Often overhead, but also in the playing fields and along Bear Creek. A pair observed courting once in April but there are no records of this species in the park during the nesting months.

This photo show a family which strolled into the park from Bear Creek, so nesting clearly occurs close by.



Wood Duck. Uncommon resident in the Rogue Valley and NMP. First seen 12/1999; 1-6 seen on 48 counts in all months. Occurrence increased from one sighting in 1999 to 10 in 2003 and remains at that level; greatest number of individuals seen on a count was in December 2004. Nesting was documented in 2003 when 7 juveniles were seen accompanied by parents in May and June. Nesting may have occurred subsequently is not documented.

American Wigeon Winter **visitor** seen regularly on large ponds in the Rogue Valley; rare **visitor** to NMP. Seen twice in the winters of 2004 and 2006.

Mallard Common **resident** of the Rogue Valley and NMP. First seen 12/1999. 1-24, seen on 101 counts throughout the year. Has nested annually close to the southernmost pond, ducklings are seen in May and June, a brood of 7 was seen in June 2005, 5 in 2006 and 11 in May 2008. One of the most frequently seen birds at NMP.

Northern Shoveler Winter visitor on lakes and ponds in the Rogue Valley; rare **visitor** seen only once at NMP, in May 2008.

Ring-necked Duck Common winter visitor to the Rogue Valley, uncommon but regular **visitor** in winter months (January, February, March) to NMP. First seen 1/2001; 1-10 seen on 21 counts December – April.

Lesser Scaup Common in winter in the Rogue Valley; rare **visitor** at NMP, seen once 2/2007.

Common Goldeneye Regular winter bird in the Rogue Valley (particularly below Lost Creek Dam), rare **visitor** to NMP. Seen 3 times - January 2003, February 2004, and April 2008.

Bufflehead Large flocks winter in the Rogue Valley, uncommon winter **visitor**, 1-2 seen on 8 counts from November to March (but also quite a few sightings on the bulletin board).

Hooded Merganser Uncommon wintering bird in the Rogue Valley and uncommon **visitor** at NMP. First seen 11/2002, 10 sightings since, usually on the big pond.

Common Merganser Common resident; uncommon **visitor** to NMP. Seen 10 times in winter - November to April, once in May. Seen regularly all year long on the Rogue River where it is followed by chicks in early summer.

Osprey Summer breeding bird in the Rogue Valley; rare **visitor** at NMP. Seen 6 times over the ponds from April to September.

White-tailed Kite Uncommon wintering bird in the Rogue Valley, some may stay in the

valley to breed; rare **visitor** to NMP. Has occurred three times at NMP in mid-winter. Forages for rodents by hovering over open fields. Its preferred habitat for foraging and nesting is in short supply in NMP.

Bald Eagle Uncommon winter visitor to the Rogue Valley, much larger numbers east of the Cascades; **rare** visitor to NMP. Seen twice at NMP, in January 2005 and March 2009.

Northern Harrier Uncommon resident of the Rogue Valley, but some may migrate south in winter; rare **winter visitor** to NMP. Single individuals observed 5 times at NMP in December - February. A hawk of the open fields, it courses back and forth over open land foraging for rodents. Nests in the Rogue Valley but the scarcity of its habitat in NMP makes it unlikely here.

Sharp-shinned Hawk Uncommon resident of the Rogue Valley; uncommon in NMP. First seen 10/2001, single bird seen on 10 counts in winter and spring. A hawk of the woods, where it feeds on small birds.

Cooper's Hawk Uncommon resident in the Rogue Valley and a close relative and larger version of the Sharp-shinned Hawk; an uncommon **visitor** to NMP. First seen 10/2001, seen 19 times from November – April, once in August. A hawk of the woods, where it feeds on small birds. Seen taking crow off the playing field in March 2005.

Red-shouldered Hawk Uncommon resident in Ashland and expanding its range slowly northward up the Rogue Valley; uncommon **visitor** to NMP. First seen 12/2999, single birds seen on 12 counts but not every year. Most sightings in 2004 (4) in the winter. This hawk is increasing in numbers in the valley and nesting has been documented in several places, including the area north of Emigrant Lake along old Rte. 99.

Red-tailed Hawk Common and widespread Rogue Valley resident, uncommon **visitor/nester** in NMP. First seen 11/1999; 1-2 seen on 21 counts in most years. Pair nested successfully in the woods in 2001 & 2002; but not since.

Golden Eagle Uncommon resident of the Rogue Valley; rare **visitor** to NMP. Seen 4 times in March/April. Pair nested successfully in a tall conifer below Roxy Ann Peak in Medford in 2001.

American Kestrel Common Rogue Valley wintering bird, less common during the breeding season but does breed; rare **visitor** at NMP but also a **nester**. First seen 11/2000, seen on 9 counts 2001 – 2006. Not seen in the park since 2006. Nested in the duck box at the edge of Bear Creek in NMP in 2003, and in a hole in the transformer structure at the south end of the park in 2006.

Merlin Winter **visitor** to the Rogue Valley, sporadic during the nesting season; **rare** at NMP. First seen 10/2002, single bird seen 7 times, most recently in June 2009.

Peregrine Falcon Uncommon resident of the Rogue Valley, rare **visitor** to NMP. Seen once in February 2004. Nests annually on the cliffs of Pilot Rock.

Ring-necked Pheasant Introduced, now resident in the Rogue Valley and former **resident** of NMP. First seen 5/2000; 1-3 on 6 counts 2000-2003, none since 9/2003. A large housing development built across Mountain Avenue from the park in 2005 eliminated all the open grassland that is essential habitat for pheasants.

California Quail Common **resident** of the Rogue Valley and NMP when the renovation of the park began in 1999, but numbers have diminished severely in the past few years. First seen 5/2000; 1-27 seen 53 times. Nesting took place in the park regularly; seven chicks accompanied by a parent were seen in August 2003, a family was seen in July 2006. From 2000 – 2006 flocks of up to 27 birds were present in late summer, by 2008 and 2009 there were few sightings each year, and of single birds. But in June 2007 and July 2009 quail chicks were spotted, indicating nesting in or close to NMP. Loss of habitat from the housing development across Mountain Avenue, accompanied by a simultaneous increase in the cat population, are the chief suspects in the decline of the quail in NMP.

American Coot Common in winter on Rogue Valley ponds but rare winter **visitor** to NMP. First seen 12/2006, 1-3 individuals seen on 8 winter counts December – March. Nests on lakes and ponds in the valley and the local mountains where reeds provide cover and nesting material.

Killdeer Common **resident**, of the Rogue Valley and NMP. First seen 11/1999; 1-12 seen on 70 counts in all months, usually 1-5. In July of 2006 10 were seen in a flock, though no juveniles were noted. This bird of the open grassland has continued to reside in the southern part of the park; often seen in the playing fields and on the oak-studded hillside. During the breeding season several birds do broken-wing displays on the hillside, signaling a nest close by. Nests have been found twice, once between the soccer fields and once on gravel surrounding the electrical sub-station.

Spotted Sandpiper Uncommon resident of the Rogue Valley, **rare visitor** in NMP. Seen on 3 counts in spring.

Wilson's Snipe Uncommon resident of Rogue Valley lakes and ponds, rare **visitor** to NMP; 1-2 seen on 9 counts October – March.

Ring-billed Gull Common non-breeding resident of the Rogue Valley; rare **visitor** to NMP. Seen on 5 counts in February and March, flock of 20 once, other times 1-2.

California Gull Rare **visitor** to NMP, 3 birds seen once in April 2006. Winters in small numbers elsewhere in the valley.

Rock Pigeon A resident of the Rogue Valley, an uncommon and sporadic **visitor** to NMP. First seen 4/2000, 1-22 on 16 counts but usually 1-6 (22 in August 2008). Breeds

under freeway bridges, rarely present in NMP during the breeding season.

Band-tailed Pigeon Migrant that comes to breed in the Rogue Valley and surrounding hills, small flocks stay the winter; rare **visitor** to NMP. 1-2 seen 4 times in April, May, July and August.

Mourning Dove Common **resident** of the Rogue Valley and NMP, First seen 5/2000, 1-48 seen on 80 counts but usually fewer than 10. A few present in the park during every breeding season, but nesting not yet documented.

Owls: These nocturnal species are under-represented on daytime counts, thus our data do not reflect to real occurrence of owls in NMP.

Western Screech-Owl Uncommon resident of the Rogue Valley, rare **visitor** to NMP. Five sightings in February, March, September and November; one found roosting in a nest-box in 2008 during a clean-out.

Great Horned Owl Uncommon resident of the Rogue Valley, uncommon **visitor/breeding bird** at NMP. A pair nested in 2007/2008, and were the apparent cause of desertion of the Great Blue Herons that were already on nests. First seen in February 2000; 1-2 seen 10 times in 2000, 2002 and 2008. Seven of the 10 sightings were in 2008; in April chicks were seen in the nest.

Northern Pygmy-Owl An uncommon Rogue Valley resident, but a rare **visitor** to NMP. One bird seen twice in winter.

Common Nighthawk A migrant and summer breeding bird in the Rogue Valley; rare **visitor** to NMP. Five birds seen in September 2008 and May 2009. The open and often rocky flatlands that are breeding habitat for this species are not present in NMP.

Vaux's Swift Migrant and summer breeder in the Rogue Valley, **migrant** observed overhead at NMP in spring and fall. 1-20 seen on 9 counts usually in May.

Anna's Hummingbird Common **resident** in the Rogue Valley; uncommon but regular in NMP. First seen 1/2001. 1-4 seen on 35 counts in all months. Nesting documented in 2006 when a female was observed on eggs at the edge of the bridge over Bear Creek. This hummingbird has expanded its range northward during the past decade and is now a fairly common resident of the Rogue Valley.

Rufous Hummingbird Common summer breeder in the Rogue Valley, rare **visitor** to NMP. A neo-tropical migrant that comes to the Rogue Valley to breed. First seen 2/2001, 1-6 seen on 9 counts from April – August. Not seen every year; nesting not documented although possible. Most sightings in August.

Belted Kingfisher Year-round resident of the Rogue Valley, fairly common **resident**

along Bear Creek in NMP. First seen 2/1999, 1-2 seen on 46 counts, in most months. Breeds in burrows in banks along the river, but such habitat is not present close to NMP and nesting here has not been documented.

Lewis's Woodpecker Rogue Valley resident, although few breeding records, rare **visitor** to NMP, seen once in September 2001. Settles in an oak-rich area for the winter, often not the same as last year's. Moves elsewhere to breed but breeding sites unknown.

Acorn Woodpecker Uncommon but regular **resident** of the Rogue Valley and NMP. First sighting was one bird in 9/1999, but not seen again until 5/2001 when the colony became established. Seen increasingly since 2001 (56 sightings), and in greater numbers since 2004. This woodpecker nests communally in dead-tree cavities. There are only a few such sites available in the park, so the population may have reached its limits. In 2004 a nesting attempt in old oak snag south of the visitor center was disrupted by starlings; in 2005 nesting was successful in a snag close to Bear Creek which is now gone. Current nest holes have not been verified, but there are apparently 1- 2 families nesting in the woodlands. This species is closely associated with oaks, and caches acorns in holes in dead trees or utility poles.

Red-breasted Sapsucker Uncommon resident of the Rogue Valley, a rare **visitor** to NMP. First seen 1/ 2002; single bird seen on 3 counts in January, August and November. Not seen since 2004.

Downy Woodpecker Common **resident** in the Rogue Valley and in NMP. First seen 12/1999, 1-3 seen on 52 counts in all months. Cavity nester; pair observed nesting in 2003, juvenile seen; brood patch evident on an adult banded by KBO in May 2007. 1-2 pairs in the park, both in the woods along Bear Creek.

Hairy Woodpecker A Rogue Valley resident found in habitat similar to the Downy Woodpecker's; rare **visitor** to NMP. First seen 9/1999, 1-4 on 8 counts. Seen far less frequently than its cogener; not seen after 8/2002 until 11/2008.

Northern Flicker Common **resident** of the Rogue Valley and NMP. First seen 10/1999; 1-6 on 101 counts in all months. A cavity nester that will also use a nest box; both situations have occurred at NMP. Apparently nests in the park every spring, although many times not observed. Pair used a hole in a snag in 2003 and again in 2007; two pairs used nest boxes in 2004. Flickers are doing well in NMP.

Pileated Woodpecker Uncommon resident of the Rogue Valley; a rare **visitor** to NMP. Single bird seen twice in May 2000 and September 2005.

Western Wood Peewee Neotropical migrant, summer **visitor/breeding bird** throughout the Rogue Valley and in NMP. First seen 9/1999, 1-7 seen on 37 counts from May through September, in every year. Brood patch evident on an adult banded by KBO in June 2008. Always at least one breeding pair in the park, sometimes 2 or 3.

Willow Flycatcher Summer visitor and possible breeding bird in the Rogue Valley; rare but regular **migrant** at NMP. Seen pre- and post-season on 8 counts in almost every year. Its preferred breeding habitat is shrub habitat, especially riparian willow thickets, breeding has not been documented in the valley.

Hammond's Flycatcher Uncommon migrant through the Rogue Valley, rare **visitor** to NMP. Seen once in April 2009. A neo-tropical migrant that nests in dense coniferous forest at high elevations around the valley.

Pacific-slope Flycatcher Regular migrant through the Rogue Valley, rare **visitor** to NMP. Seen 5 times in spring and fall.

Black Phoebe Rare but regular **resident** in the Rogue Valley and in NMP; a solitary species, population small. First seen 11/1999, 1-3 on 40 counts. Nested under the bridge at the south end of the park 2006-2009; juvenile seen there in August 2007. Apparently a single pair in NMP.

Ash-throated Flycatcher Uncommon **summer visitor** and breeding bird in the Rogue Valley; rare **visitor** to NMP. First seen in 6/2000; seen 9 times May-July. Probable nester in 2001-2002 and quite certainly in 2007, when a brood patch was in evidence on an adult banded by KBO in May.

Western Kingbird Uncommon summer **visitor/breeding bird** in the Rogue Valley and in NMP; in NMP. First seen 6/2000, 1-5 seen on 29 counts April-September, every year since except 2002. 1-3 pairs have nested on power poles and steel bars of the electrical sub-station at the south end of the park. Juvenile seen in nest in May 2007. This species summers regularly, but not in great numbers.

Cassin's Vireo Uncommon summer breeding bird in the Rogue Valley, rare **visitor** to NMP. Two sightings of a single birds in May 2002 and 2005.

Hutton's Vireo Resident in the oak woodlands of the Rogue Valley, rare **visitor** to NMP.

Seen on two counts, in August 2000 and June 2001. This vireo is usually alone and is nowhere in great numbers.

Warbling Vireo Uncommon summer breeding bird in the Rogue Valley and surrounding mountains; spring and fall **visitor** to NMP. First seen 5/2000, seen on 6 counts in May and July-September. Flock of 13 on May 2000, 1-3 on other counts.

Western Scrub-Jay Common **resident** of the Rogue Valley and NMP. First seen 9/1999, 1-18 seen on all 115 counts, usually 1-10. At least 3-4 pairs in residence but nesting has not been officially documented. This vocal bird is easy to find, see, and hear as it flies from tree to tree and calls frequently. It is noticeably quieter and often furtive during the breeding season, but has presumably bred every year. Juveniles reported in

June 2004 and July 2008, brood patch evident on an adult banded by KBO in May 2007.

American Crow Common resident of the Rogue Valley, non-breeding **resident** of NMP.

First seen 11/1999, 1-30 seen on 77 counts in all months. Small flocks often in the ball fields along with blackbirds. Nests locally in tall conifers, but apparently not in NMP.

Common Raven Common resident of the Rogue Valley, an uncommon **visitor** to NMP. First seen 12/1999, 1-7 seen on 17 counts from August to May. Not present in the breeding season. Usually in the playing fields along with crows and blackbirds.

Tree Swallow Common summer **visitor/breeding bird** in the Rogue Valley and in NMP. Of the 5 species of swallows in the valley, this one is seen most regularly and in greatest numbers. Nest boxes in all 3 ponds are occupied annually by this swallow; in one a nest-cam was placed for several seasons, and the process of nesting watched by an audience inside the nature center. First seen 4/2000, 1-150 seen on 45 counts from March – August, one early sighting in February. Pairs have also bred successfully in several nest boxes placed around the park.

Violet-green Swallow Common summer breeding bird in the Rogue Valley, a rare **visitor** to NMP. Two sightings - two in July 2000 and one in April 2009. A colonial nester; known local breeding sites include rocky bluffs along the north side of Emigrant Lake and the basalt cliffs of the Table Rocks.

Northern Rough-winged Swallow Migrant and limited breeding bird in the Rogue Valley; rare migrant **visitor** to NMP. First seen 5/2000, 2-4 seen on 7 counts in spring months.

Cliff Swallow Abundant summer breeder in the Rogue Valley, rare **visitor** to NMP. Two sightings of a single bird in June 2000 and 2001. A colonial nester, often under bridges or porches, etc. Large colonies at Hyatt Lake and on Rte. 99 under the I-5 at the base of Mt. Ashland.

Barn Swallow Common summer visitor/breeding bird in the Rogue Valley, uncommon **visitor** and occasional **breeder** in NMP. First seen 5/2000; 1-6 on 22 counts. Usually a colonial nester, often under eaves of barns and many other buildings. But in NMP a solitary pair nested under the bridge at the north end in 2006 and 2007.

Black-capped Chickadee Common **resident** in the Rogue Valley and in NMP. First seen 9/1999; 1-13 on 90 counts in all months. Nesting documented in 2007 when a brood patch was evident on an adult banded by KBO in May. There was also evidence of nesting by this species in a nest box. Probably nests every year but goes unmarked.



Oak Titmouse Common resident of the Rogue Valley but an uncommon **visitor** to NMP. First seen 3/2001 in the park; 1-2 on 13 counts through 8/2007. Sightings decreased from 5 in 2001 to 1 in subsequent years; and none after 2007.

Bushtit Uncommon **resident** of the Rogue Valley and NMP. First seen 2/2001; 1-40 seen on 29 counts in all months except June and December. Usually in small flocks foraging through the shrubs. Pair observed building nest in April 2009.



White-breasted Nuthatch Common resident of the Rogue Valley but an uncommon **resident** of NMP. First seen 12/1999; 1-2 seen on 35 counts in all months. Nesting not documented but probable. This bird is a cavity nester and forages on tree trunks and branches. Usually identified by its call, it could easily be overlooked if not vocalizing.

Brown Creeper Uncommon resident of the Rogue Valley woodlands, rare **visitor** to NMP. First seen 1/2001; single birds seen on 6 counts – 5 in winter, one in July. No documentation of nesting. This unobtrusive species is easily missed but still appears never to have taken up residence in the park, although appropriate habitat is available.

Bewick's Wren Common **resident** of the Rogue Valley and NMP. First seen 2/2000; 1-4 seen 35 times usually 3-4 times a year but only once in 2009. Seen in every month. Used a nest box in 2006, brood patch evident on an adult banded by KBO in May 2007.

House Wren Common summer breeding bird in the Rogue Valley; rare **visitor/breeder** in NMP. First seen 5/2001; 1-3 seen on 7 counts from April – August. But seen sporadically and missing in 5 of the 9 breeding seasons covered.

Winter Wren Uncommon resident of the Rogue Valley, rare **visitor** at NMP seen 3 times. First seen 2/2004, then twice in 2006, one bird each time. More common in the eastern part of the Rogue Valley and at somewhat higher elevations.

Marsh Wren Fairly common migrant and wintering bird in the Rogue Valley, rare **visitor** to NMP. Seen twice, in November 2000 and October 2007.

American Dipper Common resident in the Rogue Valley in appropriate habitat; uncommon **visitor** in Bear Creek in the park. This bird lives on and in fast mountain streams where it forages around and under rocks for invertebrates. Most often seen along Ashland Creek, occasionally on Bear Creek. First seen at NMP along Bear Creek in 1/2000; single birds seen on 9 counts from 2000 – 2005, mostly in winter months, not again until 9/2009 when the KBO banding crew heard one singing along the creek. This species is very territorial, as noted during the annual counts along Ashland Creek by Bob Quaccia. It may forage beyond its breeding territory in winter. There has been no indication of nesting at NMP.

Golden-crowned Kinglet Winter resident of Rogue Valley woodlands that breeds at high elevations; rare winter **visitor** to NMP. First seen 12/2000, 1-8 seen on 9 counts in winter.

Ruby-crowned Kinglet Common wintering bird in the Rogue Valley; frequent **visitor** in winter at NMP. First seen 11/2002, 1-10 on 38 counts from November – April. This migratory species moves north to breed.

Swainson's Thrush Migrant and summer breeding bird in the Rogue Valley, rare fall **migrant** at NMP. 1-2 birds seen twice in September.

Hermit Thrush Uncommon wintering bird in the Rogue Valley and fairly common breeding bird in the surrounding mountains; an uncommon winter **visitor** to NMP. First seen in the park 10/2000, 1-11 seen on 19 counts October – May, usually single birds. The migratory pattern of this species is in question; the montane breeding population far exceeds the wintering valley population and it seems likely that a part neo-tropical, part altitudinal migration is taking place.

Western Bluebird Common resident of the Rogue Valley, winter **visitor** to NMP. First seen 11/2000, 2-17 on 17 counts. Most sighting in October, November and December.

American Robin Common **resident** of the Rogue Valley and NMP. First seen 9/1999, 1-80 on 88 counts. Breeding documented in the park several times: 5 juveniles seen with parents in August 2002. KBO here Large flocks occur in winter.

Varied Thrush Uncommon **visitor** in winter to the Rogue Valley and NMP. First seen

1/2002, 1-11 on 6 counts, 5 in the winter of 2006-2007. This thrush breeds at high elevations and descends to the valleys for the winter, as well as migrating south. In November 2006 thrushes began arriving in large numbers and stayed to winter in the Rogue River Valley, a very unusual occurrence.

Wrentit Fairly common **resident** in the Rogue Valley and at NMP, usually found in riparian habitat, and more often heard than seen – its call is distinctive. First occurrence 1/2000, 1-2 heard on 46 counts, seen only occasionally. Brood patch evident on an adult banded by KBO in May 2007. Presumably nests every year, since this bird does not migrate and is very much bound to its territory.

Northern Mockingbird Uncommon resident of the Rogue Valley, rare **visitor** to NMP. Seen once in November 2006. A small colony of mockingbirds has been in residence in Whetstone Savannah (the oak savannah habitat below Table Rock). There have been sporadic sightings in other parts of the valley but there are no other breeding records. In the past decade this species has not spread in the valley.

European Starling Widespread **resident** of the Rogue Valley and NMP. First seen 9/1999, 1-63 seen on 111 counts. Large flocks in winter. This introduced species is considered a threat to many native cavity nesters as it is aggressive and numerous. In NMP it has been observed contesting Acorn Woodpeckers for a cavity in an old oak close to the visitor center; the starlings won the contest.

Cedar Waxwing Common resident of the Rogue Valley, fairly common **visitor** to NMP. First seen 9/1999; 1-158 seen on 43 counts in all months except June/July. Large flocks September – November when elderberries and other fruits are ripe.

Nashville Warbler Common summer breeding bird in the Rogue Valley, rare spring **migrant** at NMP. One bird seen twice in April and September 2008.

Orange-crowned Warbler Migrant through the Rogue Valley and a harbinger of spring that arrives in early April; uncommon **migrant** in NMP. First seen 4/2000, 1-15 seen on 10 counts in spring and fall. Was not observed at NMP in 2008 or 2009.

Yellow Warbler Spring and fall migrant and breeder in the Rogue Valley; rare **migrant** in NMP. 1-2 birds seen on 8 counts *en route* to and from breeding grounds, most in May or August.

Yellow-rumped Warbler Uncommon in the Rogue Valley in winter, more present in spring and fall when the neo-tropical portion of the population is migrating to breeding grounds at high elevations around the valley. Uncommon **visitor** to NMP. 1-20 seen on 13 counts from September through May, mostly in spring months. Not present during the breeding season.

Black-throated Gray Warbler Migrant and breeding bird in the Rogue Valley,

particularly in the western part where breeding is probable in several riparian areas; uncommon fall **migrant** in NMP. 1-3 seen on 5 counts, once in August and 5 times in September.

MacGillivray's Warbler Uncommon breeding bird in the Rogue Valley; rare **visitor** to NMP. One bird seen twice, in August 2004 and September 2008.

Common Yellowthroat Summer visitor and breeder in the Rogue Valley; **migrant** in NMP. First seen 9/1999, 1-10 seen on 24 counts and in every year in spring and fall. Breeds in reeds in fresh water marshes; there is a small amount of this type of habitat, perhaps not enough for breeding.

Wilson's Warbler Common migrant and uncommon breeding bird in the western part of the Rogue Valley; uncommon spring and fall **migrant** in NMP. First seen in May 2000, 1-15 seen 10 times, most in April and May. Nests predominantly at higher elevations, although nesting has been documented in the western part of the valley.

Yellow-breasted Chat Uncommon summer **visitor/breeding bird** in the riparian habitat of the Rogue Valley and in NMP. First seen 5/2001, 1-3 seen on 22 counts from May through July and in every year. 1-2 pairs nest in dense vegetation along Bear Creek in the park. An adult seen in mating display in May 2003; brood patches evident on adults banded by KBO in June 2007 and 2008.

Western Tanager Common summer visitor and breeding bird in the Rogue Valley, uncommon **migrant** in spring and fall in NMP. 1-6 seen on 21 counts, a few in spring, but mostly in August and September.

Spotted Towhee Common **resident** in the Rogue Valley and in NMP. One of the most frequently encountered birds in the park. Although it is secretive, its calls frequently plaintive from the brushy habitat that is its preference. First seen 9/1999, 1-12 on 103 counts, seen or heard in every month and on almost every count. An estimated 3-6 pairs in the park, but there are no observations of nests or juveniles.

California Towhee Uncommon **resident** of the Rogue Valley and NMP. First seen 5/2000, 1-2 seen on 19 counts from 2000-2009 in scattered months throughout the year. The valley is the northernmost limit of this bird's range. Although there seem to be more sightings in other parts of the valley, there has been little change in occurrence in the park.

Chipping Sparrow A fairly common breeding bird in summer in the higher elevations of the Rogue Valley; a rare **visitor** to NMP. One bird seen once in September 2002. This neo-tropical migrant winters mostly south of the border, although there is an occasional sighting here in winter.

Fox Sparrow Fairly common winter bird in the Rogue Valley basin, breeds at higher

elevations; uncommon **visitor** in winter to NMP. First seen 11/1999, 1-6 seen on 35 counts from September through April. There are 4 sub-species of this sparrow generally recognized, and there is question whether the wintering birds in the valley are breeding in the surrounding mountains or whether another sub-species migrates north to breed here. 1-3 often on the ground under the feeders during feeder watch sessions.

Song Sparrow Common **resident** of the Rogue Valley and NMP. First seen 9/1999, 1-22 seen on 107 counts and in all months, larger numbers in winter. This bird is closely associated with riparian vegetation especially the dense shrubbery in the woodlands of the park. Presumably nests every year in the park; brood patch in evidence on adults banded by KBO in May 2007 and July 2008. An estimated 5-7 pairs nest in the park. It is one of the most frequently encountered birds in the park.

Lincoln's Sparrow Uncommon **visitor** in winter to the Rogue Valley and in NMP. First seen 10/1999, 1-5 seen on 24 counts from September - December and again in April. Nests at high elevations in wet meadows such as on the south slope of Mt. Ashland. More secretive than the Song Sparrow, but often seen under the feeders.

White-throated Sparrow This eastern sparrow is a rare **visitor** in winter in the Rogue Valley and in NMP. First seen 12/2003, single birds seen on 4 counts in winter. Usually in company with White-crowned and Golden-crowned Sparrows.

White-crowned Sparrow Fairly common winter **visitor** in the Rogue Valley and in NMP. First seen 10/1999, 1-20 seen on 56 counts from September through April. Migrates north and up into the mountains to breed. Often in company with Golden-crowned Sparrow but in much smaller numbers.

Golden-crowned Sparrow Common **winter visitor** in the Rogue Valley and in NMP. First seen 10/1999, 1-60 seen on 77 counts from September through April. Seen in flocks on the ground under the feeders during feeder watches, largest numbers in midwinter. Migrates north and up into the mountains to breed.

Dark-eyed Junco Common resident of the Rogue Valley that winters throughout the lowlands and breeds in coniferous forests at higher elevations; an uncommon but regular **visitor** in winter in NMP. First seen 11/1999, 1-32 seen on 47 counts from September – May. Seen mostly on the ground or in low shrubs. Although not a common species, it is seen regularly every winter.

Snow Bunting Rare and out-of-range **visitor** to the Rogue Valley and NMP. One seen in Talent in March 1994, one at NMP in October 2002. This migratory species winters in northern U.S. east of Oregon, is rare west of the Cascades.

Black-headed Grosbeak Summer **visitor/breeder** to the Rogue Valley and NMP. First seen 5 /2000, 1-9 seen on 30 counts from April to August. Nests every year in NMP, and although considered uncommon because its occurrence falls in that category, its

regularity makes it a frequently seen species during the breeding season. One or two pairs arrive every spring. Brood patch evident on adult sanded by KBO in 2007/2008, 3 juveniles seen in July 2008.

Lazuli Bunting A neo-tropical migrant that breeds in the Rogue Valley, but a rare **visitor** to NMP. Seen twice, in May and July 2007.

Red-winged Blackbird Common **resident** of the Rogue Valley and NMP. First seen 9/1999, 1-88 seen on 100 counts in every month. Breeds in the cattails around the ponds; two juveniles were seen in July 2006. Probably a number of nests, but it is difficult to estimate the number of pairs as this species can be polygonous.

Western Meadowlark Common resident of the Rogue Valley, uncommon **visitor** to NMP. 1-17 seen on 17 counts but not during the breeding season. Probably more common before the ball fields were constructed, as this is a bird of the open grasslands.

Brewer's Blackbird Common resident of the Rogue Valley and NMP. First seen 10/1999, 1-33 on 76 counts in all months. Brood patch evident on an adult banded by KBO in June 2008, and 3 juveniles seen in July 2008, so presumably there were nesting pairs close to the park.

Brown-headed Cowbird Common resident of the Rogue Valley; fairly common **visitor** to NMP during the breeding season. First seen 4/2000, 1-11 seen on 23 counts from April to September every year. This cowbird is a brood parasite; laying an egg in the nest of another (usually smaller) bird and leaving it to be raised by the unknowing host. It probably parasitizes nesting birds in NMP, although there are no reports of such observations. The most common documentation of parasitism is when a huge cowbird chick is seen being fed by a small warbler or other passerine. In winter it gravitates towards pastures, dumps, etc. and congregates with other blackbirds, crows and ravens.

Bullock's Oriole Common summer **visitor/breeding bird** in the Rogue Valley and at NMP. First seen 5/2000, 1-8 seen on 26 counts from April until August. 1-2 pairs apparently nest in NMP and juveniles are often present in July. Like the Black-headed Grosbeak, this species is a regular returnee to nest in the park.

Purple Finch Uncommon resident of the Rogue Valley, present in NMP in all except the breeding months. First seen 9/1999, 1-5 seen on 26 counts and in all months except June/July. Apparently does not nest in the park.

House Finch Common **resident** of the Rogue Valley and NMP. First seen 10/1999, 1-16 seen on 78 counts in all months. Breeding was documented in July 2006 when 4 juveniles were seen begging from an adult.

Pine Siskin Uncommon winter **visitor** to the Rogue Valley and NMP. First seen 11/1999, and on 22 counts since. 1-77 on 22 counts from November through April.

Usually 1-10, but large flocks of over 70 seen twice.

Red Crossbill Uncommon visitor to the Rogue Valley; **rare visitor** to NMP. One bird seen once in March 2007, a winter when there was an influx of this species in the valley.

Lesser Goldfinch Common **resident** of the Rogue Valley and NMP. 1-76 seen on 89 counts in all months. Nest found in an ornamental shrub in 2006; a juvenile observed being fed by an adult in July 2006. One of our most common and easily seen birds.

American Goldfinch Fairly common **resident** of the Rogue Valley and NMP. First seen 10/1999, 1- 30 seen on 53 counts in all months. Not seen as frequently as its close relative the Lesser Goldfinch. Presumably nests but nesting has not been documented.

Evening Grosbeak Sporadic visitor to the Rogue Valley, rare **visitor** to NMP. Five sightings of 1-6 birds in April, May and September. This species roams around the valley in winter and its presence cannot be predicted; in summer it breeds at higher elevations.

House Sparrow Common **resident** of the Rogue Valley and fairly common in NMP. First seen 1/2000, 1-10 seen on 35 counts in all months. This introduced species is well established all over the U.S. It is a cavity nester. Nesting has not been documented in the park but very probably occurs.