

PEREGRINE BIRD TOURS

UTAH AND ARIZONA

8th - 23rd May 2019

TOUR REPORT

LEADERS: Chris Doughty and Mark Stackhouse.

Our tour to Utah and the Grand Canyon, was a great success. It was late spring, and many of the birds we were looking for had already started nesting, while good numbers of other species, were still passing through on migration. Throughout the tour we continued to find good numbers of noteworthy birds, and highlights were many and varied; they included a small flock of Neotropic Cormorants at Tonaquint Park, in St. George, a soaring California Condor in Zion National Park, plus a few more at the Vermilion Cliffs, none of us will ever forget the amazing displaying male Sage Grouse at the lek at Henifer, plus two Dusky Grouse in the snow in the Manti - La Sal National Forest, we found a few flocks of stunning Wilson's Phalaropes, the females in stunning full breeding plumage and we encountered huge numbers of Red-necked Phalaropes at the Great Salt Lake, along with small flocks of stunning Franklin's Gulls also in full breeding plumage. In southern Utah we found both White-winged and Inca Doves, both recent colonisers to Utah, the Greater Roadrunner made quite an impression, as did the American Dipper. Vagrants to Utah included a couple of Vaux's Swifts, a Northern Waterthrush and a beautiful adult male Lark Bunting, which were all greatly appreciated. The main mammalian highlight, was a colony of endangered Utah Prairie Dogs.

Following a couple of long and tiring flights from Australia, we met up with our guide Mark at the airport in Salt Lake City. We did a little birding around the airport and in the grounds of our hotel in the city and we added a few birds while driving in and around the city. Birds observed included Canada Goose, Mallard, Swainson's Hawk, American Avocet, Feral Pigeon, Mourning Dove, Black-billed Magpie, Barn and Cliff Swallows, American Robin, European Starling, Great-tailed Grackle and House Sparrow. In the late afternoon, we drove to Little Cottonwood Canyon where our main target species was the highly localised Black Rosy-Finch. We knew that our only chance of seeing this uncommon and range restricted species, was if there had been a late snow fall in the area, which would force the birds to a lower altitude, along the edge of the snowline. During the drive it was raining hard as we drove through Salt Lake City, which did not bode well. Fortunately, it had snowed hard the day before in Little Cottonwood Canyon and when we reached the canyon it started to snow fairly heavily. We spent the rest of the afternoon in bitterly cold conditions, checking out a group of bird feeders. We were extremely lucky, the plan worked perfectly, we found a small flock of four Black Rosy-Finches including two adult males in superb breeding plumage. Other birds observed in and around the feeders included a very fine Northern Flicker, a particularly tame Downy Woodpecker, a single Common Raven, a Slate-colored Fox Sparrow, good numbers of Dark-eyed Juncos, White-crowned Sparrow, Cassin's Finch and Pine Siskin.

We spent the early part of the following morning birding along the causeway, which runs through the middle of the Great Salt Lake. The lake was literally teeming with all kinds of wetland birds, including large numbers of migratory waders. We found huge numbers of Eared Grebes, good numbers of American White Pelicans, several Great Blue Herons, a couple of Black-crowned Night-Herons and large numbers of White-faced Ibis. Wildfowl was well represented, and we saw

good numbers of Gadwall, Northern Shoveler, Cinnamon Teal, Redhead and Ruddy Ducks, as well as a few Lesser Scaup. There were plenty of Northern Harriers flying above the wetlands, small numbers of American Coot swam in the shallows, we found a handful of uncommon Snowy Plovers, several Killdeer, flocks of Black-necked Stilts, Long-billed Curlews proved plentiful, a few flocks of Long-billed Dowitchers flew overhead and there were an ample supply of small flocks of delightful Red-necked Phalaropes. We found large numbers of Franklin's, Ringed-billed and California Gulls loafing around in the shallows, with smaller numbers of Caspian Terns. Eurasian Collared-Doves proved commonplace, we observed a couple of splendid Burrowing Owls, a few Western Kingbirds, several attractive Loggerhead Shrikes, small flocks of Tree and Bank Swallows, small groups of Savannah and Song Sparrows and conspicuous flocks of Red-winged, Yellow-headed and Brewer's Blackbirds. Our first mammal of the tour, was a single Black-tailed Jackrabbit. Later in the morning we went birding on Antelope Island, a large island in the lake, which produced good close looks at American Kestrel, Chukar, Virginia Rail, a pair of enormous Great Horned Owls, Hammond's Flycatcher, Say's Phoebe, Horned Lark, Sage Thrasher, Yellow Warbler and Western Meadowlark. Mammals on the island included Pronghorn, American Bison and Mule Deer. We spent the afternoon birding in the Bear River Migratory Bird Refuge, and here we added Pied-billed, Western and Clark's Grebes, Double-crested Cormorant, Snowy and Western Cattle Egrets, Northern Pintail, Blue-winged Teal, Turkey Vulture, Red-tailed Hawk, a pair of nesting Bald Eagles, Common Pheasant, delightful Sandhill Cranes, Willet, several superbly plumaged Wilson's Phalaropes, Forster's Tern, Chipping, Brewer's and Lark Sparrows and Brown-headed Cowbird. We also saw an adult male Lark Bunting, which is an unusual visitor to this area. We also enjoyed our only sighting of Muskrat here. While walking to dinner in Brigham City, we saw a pair of American Crows. After dinner we visited Willard Bay State Park, but it was already getting dark and the only bird of note, was a stunning male Black-headed Grosbeak.

First light the following morning found us sitting in the bus at Henifer, where we were literally surrounded by displaying male Sage Grouse, it was a great spectacle, as they strutted around with their tails spread vertically, filoplumes raised and huge yellow air sacs inflated, it was a super start to the morning. Along the fence line, we noted our first of many Vesper Sparrows. Our next birding stop was at Little Immigration Canyon, on the edge of the Salt Lake Valley, here we added several Common Loons, a pair of in flight Golden Eagles, a Spotted Sandpiper, our only sighting of Belted Kingfisher for the tour, a rather furtive Gray Catbird, both Spotted and Green-tailed Towhees and American Goldfinch. New mammals included Mountain Cottontail, Yellow-bellied Marmot, Uinta Ground Squirrel, Elk and Moose. In the afternoon we began the long drive to Bryce Canyon National Park. We broke the long drive with a birding stop at Chicken Creek Reservoir, and here we added Green-winged Teal, Ring-necked Duck, Northern Rough-winged Swallow, Blue-gray Gnatcatcher and several splendid Audubon's Warblers.

The morning dawned bright and clear, with the temperature bang on freezing point, and it felt like it, as we entered Bryce Canyon National Park, however, the spectacular views and multi-hued spires of red and white, made it all well worth the effort. The birding was surprisingly good and new birds popped up in the surrounding forest at regular intervals throughout the day; they included White-throated Swift, Black-chinned Hummingbird, Hairy Woodpecker, Plumbeous Vireo, Steller's Jay, Violet-green Swallow, Mountain Chickadee, White-breasted, Red-breasted and Pygmy Nuthatches, Brown Creeper, both Mountain and Western Bluebirds, Townsend's Solitaire, stunningly beautiful Cedar Waxwings and the range restricted Grace's Warbler. New mammals today included Golden-mantled Ground-Squirrel, Least Chipmunk and the endangered Utah Prairie Dog.

We started the day with some pre breakfast birding at the nearby Severe River, at Panguitch. A Dusky Flycatcher was a welcome edition to our ever growing birdlist, a male House Wren sat in a tree and sang to us, the stunningly beautiful Bullock's Oriole showed well and a few Lesser

Goldfinches brightened up the morning. We also spent some time watching a rather distant Red Fox. Following a memorable breakfast at the local diner, we began the long drive to Zion National Park. We broke the long drive with a birding stop at the Shingle Creek Rest Area, at Glendale, and here we added a splendid Virginia's Warbler and the equally stunning Western Tanager. Late morning birding in Zion National Park produced Black-throated Gray Warbler, attractive Lazuli Buntings and House Finch, as well as the first of many Rock Squirrels. Following lunch in the park, we drove to the town of Hurricane, not far from St. George, where we watched a pair of decidedly uncommon Hooded Orioles, at their nest site, in a large palm tree. We then continued on to Pine Valley, where we saw a small number of Wild Turkeys. We checked a couple of bird feeders in Pine Valley, and we were rewarded with good close views of Broad-tailed Hummingbird and Woodhouse's Scrub Jay. We then went owling, but unfortunately, the owls were a no show.

All of the following day, was spent walking the trails in the scenically spectacular Zion National Park. In the morning we walked the Emerald Pools Trail, which led to a large waterfall with sparkling emerald coloured pools at the foot of the waterfall, new birds for the tour along the way included an obliging Ash-throated Flycatcher, very many Warbling Vireos and a splendid Summer Tanager. However, the star of the show was undoubtedly a spectacular adult California Condor, which Nick spotted flying in front of a large cliff-face, we were able to watch it circling around for quite some time, it was a real treat. In the afternoon, we walked a trail alongside the north fork of the Virgin River, here we enjoyed prolonged close looks at a male Common Merganser, preening itself, in the river, we also had particularly good looks at a Black Phoebe, sallying for insects along the bank of the river, and everyone was particularly pleased to observe a pair of American Dippers, flying down the river together. After leaving the park, we drove to St. George.

Following breakfast we drove to nearby Tonaquint Park, in St. George, where we added several new birds to our growing bird list. A Peregrine Falcon flew right past us, a Ladder-backed Woodpecker put in a brief appearance, some of the group saw a Common Yellowthroat, a Blue Grosbeak showed well, as did the range restricted Abert's Towhee. However, the prolonged sighting of a Greater Roadrunner, caused even greater excitement amongst the group. Another sighting of some note, was a small flock of ten or so Neotropic Cormorants, a species which is spreading northwards from Mexico. We also saw a Desert Cottontail. Our next birding stop was at the Brooks Nature Park, also in St. George, our main target species here was the delightful Phainopepla, and in no time at all, it duly obliged, and we saw it very well on several occasions. Other new species which we saw here were Northern Mockingbird, Lucy's Warbler and Verdin. Next, we drove to the nearby Red Cliffs National Conservation Area, just outside St. George, where we taped in a rather obliging Black-throated Sparrow. We then drove to Quail Creek Reservoir, where we enjoyed great looks at both Bewick's and Canyon Wrens, one on one side of the road, and one on the other! We then drove to Hurricane, searching for two more species of birds, that are slowly spreading northwards from Mexico, and in no time at all, we were enjoying super looks at both White-winged and Inca Doves. Here, we also added a singing Rock Wren, which was greatly appreciated.

Following a hearty breakfast we drove to the North Rim of the Grand Canyon National Park, in Arizona. Where we walked one of many walking trails, the trail gently dipped and rolled in unison with the top of the rim, and we were able to watch the different layers of rock, change in colour, as the sun rose higher and higher. The only new birds here were quick looks at both Golden-crowned and Ruby-crowned Kinglets. A second walking trail in the afternoon produced Northern Red Squirrel and Uinta Chipmunk.

The following day was very much a travel day, as we drove to our hotel in Bluff, which was situated very close to Monument Valley. It was a very enjoyable drive, through some great sagebrush country, and we had plenty of time to stop and do some birding along the way. We drove

along the House Rock Valley Road, in Arizona. At one time we made a prolonged stop at the Vermilion Cliffs, a known breeding site for California Condors. We were not to be disappointed, we found a single bird perched on the cliff-face, and up to four birds flying around the cliffs. In the surrounding sagebrush country, we enjoyed great looks at Gray Vireo, a small flock of Bushtits and best of all, super looks at the recently split Sagebrush Sparrow. We also saw our first Coyote of the tour.

We spent the whole of the following day in the magnificent Monument Valley, characterised by a cluster of vast sandstone buttes, the largest reaching 300 metres above the valley floor. The valley lies within the territory of the Navajo Nation Reservation, and its 13 square kilometres, have defined what decades of movie-goers think of, when they imagine the American West. It was a wonderful experience to travel through country belonging to the great Navajo Nation, and made even more special, to have both a male and a female Navajo guides. They took us to very special places, not normally accessible to the general public. They guided us to ancient Anasazi ruins, where they sang a song, glorifying their ancient ancestors. It was simply magical, and for once, and only once, even the birding, took a back seat! We did however add two species of birds to our ever growing bird list, we enjoyed good sightings of Western Wood-Pewee and Cassin's Kingbird, and we also saw our only Cliff Chipmunk of the tour.

The following morning, back in Utah, we did some pre-breakfast birding at Sand Island, close to Bluff. The island is situated in the San Juann River, a major tributary of the Colorado River. Here we played hide-and-seek, with a number of Yellow-breasted Chats, who proved rather reluctant to show themselves, a well-known characteristic of this particular species. However, following a little effort, we managed to see them well. We also had a surprise sighting of a Northern Waterthrush, which is a vagrant species to this part of the country. We then drove to the Hatch Trading Post, where we all heard Gambel's Quail, but unfortunately, I was the only one who saw one. We then had a long drive to Moab, where upon our arrival, we did some birding in the Manti - La Selle National Forest, where our main target species, the Dusky Grouse, failed to show, however, we were rewarded with good looks at a Cordilleran Flycatcher and a MacGillivray's Warbler.

Most of the morning was spent birding in the Matheson Wetland Preserve, at Moab. Here new birds included Olive-sided and Willow Flycatchers and Black-capped Chickadee. We also saw a couple of Vaux's Swifts, this species is a vagrant to this part of the country. We then drove to Canyonlands National Park, and during the drive, a White-tailed Antelope Squirrel ran across the road, in front of the bus. On arriving in the national park we explored some stunning canyons and arches, and some ancient rock pictographs, our only new bird here was the rather plain Juniper Titmouse.

The following morning we drove to the Manti - La Selle National Forest, where we drove up to the snowline, following a great deal of searching, we were rewarded with views of two separate Dusky Grouse, our main target species here. Other new birds this morning, included Cooper's Hawk, Hermit Thrush and Orange-crowned Warbler. In the afternoon we made a visit to Old City Park, in Moab, where we enjoyed watching a group of stunningly beautiful Wood Ducks.

The following day we reluctantly began our drive back to Salt Lake City. We had one birding stop along the way to look for the beautiful Pinyon Jay. We searched along the road to Horse Canyon, not far from Price, and in no time at all, we were watching the jays, as well as a pair of Gray Flycatchers. Upon our arrival in Salt Lake City, we drove to a known site for California Quail, which we saw very well. We then had lunch and drove to the airport, to conclude a very enjoyable tour to Utah and the Grand Canyon. The scenery was truly spectacular, and the birds and mammals were also most enjoyable.

SYSTAMATIC LIST

LOONS

Common Loon *Gavia inner* This attractive species is a common passage migrant throughout Utah, from breeding grounds in Canada and Alaska, and wintering grounds in coastal Mexico. We saw a few birds at a small reservoir in Little Immigration Canyon, close to Salt Lake City, and at Quail Creek Reservoir, close to Hurricane.

GREBES

Eared Grebe *Podiceps nigricollis* A common breeding resident, we observed large numbers on a several occasions, throughout the tour.

Pied-billed Grebe *Podilymbus podiceps* An uncommon resident, which we saw very well, on a couple of occasions, in the Bear River Migratory Bird Refuge, close to Salt Lake City.

Western Grebe *Aechmophorus occidentalis* This large species of grebe, is a common summer breeding visitor, which we saw very well at a number of wetland areas, throughout the tour.

Clark's Grebe *Aechmophorus clarkii* An uncommon summer breeding bird, we saw small numbers, in the Bear River Migratory Bird Refuge, close to Salt Lake City. Lieutenant John Henry Clark (1830-1885) was an American surveyor, naturalist and collector. He was a zoologist on the US/Mexican Border Survey (1850-1855). During this survey, he collected the grebe, and two reptiles and an amphibian, which were named after him.

PELICANS

American White Pelican *Pelecanus erythrorhynchos* A bird of inland lakes, it is an uncommon summer breeding bird to Utah. We saw large numbers at the Great Salt Lake and smaller numbers, at scattered localities throughout the tour.

CORMORANTS

Double-crested Cormorant *Phalacrocorax auritus* In Utah, this species is an uncommon summer breeding visitor to the Salt Lake area, and an uncommon passage migrant elsewhere in the state. We observed small numbers in the Bear River Migratory Bird Refuge, close to Salt Lake City and a few in the Tonaquint Park, at St. George.

Neotropic Cormorant *Phalacrocorax brasilianus* This predominantly South American species is extending its territory northwards, at a steady rate, and small numbers reach Utah, annually. We saw a flock of approximately ten birds, in the Tonaquint Park, at St. George.

HERONS, EGRETS and BITTERNs

Great Blue Heron *Ardea herodias* An uncommon resident, we saw small numbers, at most of the wetlands we visited.

Snowy Egret *Egretta thula* An uncommon summer breeding visitor, which we saw well, at the Bear River Migratory Bird Refuge, close to Salt Lake City, and at a small reservoir, in Little Immigration Canyon, outside Salt Lake City.

Western Cattle Egret *Bulbulcus ibis* An uncommon passage migrant in Utah, we saw a small number in the Bear River Migratory Bird Refuge, close to Salt Lake City.

Black-crowned Night-Heron *Nycticorax nycticorax* An uncommon resident of Utah, we saw a couple of birds in flight, at the Great Salt Lake.

IBISES and SPOONBILLS

White-faced Ibis *Plegadis chihi* A common summer breeding visitor to northern Utah, we saw large numbers at the Great Salt Lake.

SWANS, GEESE and DUCKS

- Canada Goose** *Branta canadensis* This common species, is a year round resident in northern Utah, and a winter visitor, to southern Utah. We saw small flocks scattered throughout the tour.
- Wood Duck** *Aix sponsa* This attractive species is predominantly a passage migrant in Utah, however, we found a small breeding population in a small park in Moab, in southern Utah.
- Mallard** *Anas platyrhynchos* A common resident throughout northern Utah, and a common winter visitor throughout southern Utah. We observed small numbers, at most of the wetlands we visited.
- Northern Pintail** *Anas acuta* An uncommon breeding resident at the Great Salt Lake, and an uncommon winter visitor elsewhere in Utah. We saw a pair in the Bear River Migratory Bird Refuge, close to Salt Lake City, and a second pair at a small reservoir, in Little Immigration Canyon, outside Salt Lake City.
- Gadwall** *Anas strepera* A common breeding resident around the Great Salt Lake, and a common winter visitor elsewhere in Utah. We saw small numbers in and around the Great Salt Lake and a few birds at a small reservoir, in Little Immigration Canyon, outside Salt Lake City.
- Northern Shoveler** *Anas clypeata* A common breeding resident around the Great Salt Lake, and a common winter visitor to southern Utah. Good numbers were present, at some of the wetlands we visited.
- Blue-winged Teal** *Anas discors* A common passage migrant in Utah. We observed small numbers in the Bear River Migratory Bird Refuge, close to Salt Lake City.
- Cinnamon Teal** *Anas cyanoptera* A common summer breeding visitor throughout Utah, we saw good numbers at scattered locations throughout northern Utah.
- Green-winged Teal** *Anas carolinensis* The Green-winged Teal is a common winter visitor throughout Utah. We found small numbers still lingering at Chicken Creek Reservoir, close to Nephi, and at Kens Lake, in Moab.
- Lesser Scaup** *Aythya affinis* This species is an uncommon winter visitor throughout Utah. We found small numbers still lingering at the Great Salt Lake, and at a small reservoir, close to Hurricane.
- Ring-necked Duck** *Aythya collaris* Predominantly an uncommon winter visitor, we found small numbers still lingering at the Chicken Creek Reservoir, close to Nephi, and at a small reservoir, close to Hurricane.
- Redhead** *Aythya americana* Predominantly an uncommon winter visitor, we found small numbers still lingering at the Great Salt Lake, and at Chicken Creek Reservoir, close to Nephi.
- Common Merganser** *Mergus merganser* Predominantly an uncommon winter visitor to Utah, we found a couple of birds along the rivers in Zion National park.
- Ruddy Duck** *Oxyura jamaicensis* A common breeding resident, and summer breeding visitor in Utah, which we saw well, at a number of wetlands throughout the tour.

NEW WORLD VULTURES

Turkey Vulture *Cathartes aura* A common summer breeding visitor to Utah, which we observed on almost every day of the tour.

California Condor *Gymnogyps californianus* This huge species of New World vulture, is a very rare and highly localised endemic of California and Arizona. We were very fortunate, that Nick pointed out an adult bird in Zion National Park and then we saw several birds at the Vermilion Cliffs, in Arizona. This species is classified as Critically Endangered by 'Birdlife International'. The California Condor has been rare and declining for as long as the species has been known to science. By 1968 the total wild population was estimated at about 60 birds, dropping to around 10 by 1985, and in 1987, when the last few wild birds were

captured, the total population was 27 individuals, all in captivity. An intensive and successful captive breeding program, led to the reintroduction of condors at several sites in California, and at the Grand Canyon, in Arizona, in the 1990s. There is now a tiny population of 73 birds, and with ongoing intensive conservation management efforts, the population is expected to increase. The main threat to this species, is lead poisoning, as a result of birds ingesting lead shot, from the carcasses of the dead animals they eat.

KITES, HAWKS and EAGLES

Bald Eagle *Haliaeetus leucocephalus* This magnificent raptor, is predominantly an uncommon winter visitor to Utah. However, a few birds do breed in the state, and we were fortunate to observe a pair of breeding birds in the Bear River Migratory Bird Refuge. We also saw a pair of birds at a small reservoir in Little Immigration Canyon, just outside Salt Lake City.

Northern Harrier *Circus hudsonius* This species of harrier, is an uncommon resident throughout Utah. We saw it well, on several occasions, while birding at the Great Salt Lake.

Cooper's Hawk *Accipiter cooperii* This species is an uncommon resident, we saw it well, circling overhead in the Manti – La Sal National Forest, and we saw a second bird along Horse Canyon Road, near Price, on the last day of the tour. **William C. Cooper** (1798-1864) was a New York conchologist and collector. He was one of the founders of the American Museum of Natural History, in New York. He was also the father of Dr James G Cooper (1830-1902) who worked for the Pacific Railroad Survey in California and for whom the Cooper Ornithological Society is named, as well as a number of birds, in their scientific names. **Bonaparte** described and named Cooper's Hawk.

Red-tailed Hawk *Buteo jamaicensis* This common resident, was seen well, on most days of the tour.

Swainson's Hawk *Buteo swainsoni* This attractive species is an uncommon summer breeding visitor throughout Utah. We saw a few birds very well, during our time in and around Salt Lake City. **William Swainson** (1789-1855) was a naturalist and bird illustrator. He was born in Liverpool, the son of a collector of customs duty. He served for 8 years from 1807-1815 with the army commissariat and amassed a very large collection of zoological specimens. At the end of the Napoleonic war he retired on half-pay. From 1816-1818 he travelled and collected extensively throughout Brazil. In 1840 he travelled to New Zealand and became the countries first Attorney General. Unfortunately, most of his collections of specimens were lost on the voyage to New Zealand, where he remained for the rest of his life.

Golden Eagle *Aquila chrysaetos* In Utah, this majestic species, is a rare resident of mountains, grasslands and deserts, usually far from human habitation. We were very fortunate, to see it particularly well, on a few occasions.

CARACARAS and FALCONS

American Kestrel *Falco sparverius* A common resident throughout Utah, which we saw well, on several occasions.

Peregrine Falcon *Falco peregrinus* In Utah, this well known species of falcon, is an uncommon summer breeding visitor. We saw it well, on one occasion, as it flew above our heads, in Tonaquint Park, at St. George.

TURKEYS

Wild Turkey *Meleagris gallopavo* An uncommon resident of southern Utah, we encountered a small flock, in woodland at Pine Valley.

GROUSE, PTARMIGANS and PRAIRIE-CHICKENS

Sage Grouse *Centrocercus urophasianus* Very recently the Greater Sage-Grouse, and the Gunnison Sage-Grouse, have been lumped together, and the species is now known simply,

as Sage-Grouse. In Utah, this species is an uncommon resident of sagebrush plains in the north of the state. One of the highlights of the tour, was watching a lek, where the males were displaying to the females, at Henifer.

Dusky Grouse *Dendragapus obscurus* A recent split from Blue Grouse, the Dusky Grouse is an uncommon resident, in suitable habitat throughout Utah. We were very fortunate to observe two separate birds, while birding above the snowline in the Manti – La Sal National Forest.

NEW WORLD QUAIL

California Quail *Callipepla californica* This attractive species, is an uncommon resident, in the far north of Utah. We observed a pair of birds at close quarters, on the last day of the tour, in the suburbs of Salt Lake City.

Gambel's Quail *Callipepla gambelii* This species is an uncommon resident in the shrubby deserts of Utah. A small covey was present at Hatch Trading Post, but try as we may, I was the only person who saw one. **Dr. William Gambel** (1821-1849) was an American physician, naturalist and collector. It is claimed, that he unfortunately, broke the first rule of natural history, when he named a bird that he had discovered, after himself. While riding along the Santa Fe Trail in 1842, Gambel collected a specimen and labelled it 'Gambel's Quail', apparently believing his friend **Thomas Nuttall**, had already named it after him. However, according to **John Cassin**, he was the one who named it in Gambel's honour. Regardless, of what took place, the name became official, nonetheless. Gambel finding himself short of money, joined the US Navy as a clerk, on the USS Cyane. He served on a number of vessels between 1842 to 1845, and during this time he collected on the Pacific coasts of both North and South America. He studied medicine at the University of Pennsylvania from 1845 to 1848, and he decided to set up a medical practice in California, and left by the overland route. He joined a party of the famous 49ers, on their way to the California Gold Rush. Most of the party died attempting to cross the rugged Sierra Nevada Mountains during mid-winter. He made it across into California, but there he caught typhoid and died.

PHARTRIDGES and PHEASANTS

Chukar *Alectoris chukar* This introduced species is an uncommon resident throughout Utah. We had distant views of a couple of birds on Antelope Island, in the Great Salt Lake.

Ring-necked Pheasant *Phasianus colchicus* This introduced species is also an uncommon resident throughout Utah. We saw a single bird very well on one occasion, in the Bear River Migratory Bird Refuge.

CRANES

Sandhill Crane *Grus canadensis* This large species is a fairly common migrant throughout Utah. We enjoyed sightings of a few birds in the Bear River Migratory Bird Refuge and again in Bryce Canyon National Park.

RAILS, GALLINULES and COOTS

Virginia Rail *Rallus limicola* This species is an uncommon summer breeding visitor to Utah. We saw a pair of birds very well on Antelope Island, in the Great Salt Lake, and I saw a single bird at Tonaquint Park, at St. George.

American Coot *Fulica americana* This species is a common resident, throughout Utah. We saw it at most of the wetlands we visited.

STILTS and AVOCETS

Black-necked Stilt *Himantopus mexicanus* This species is a locally common summer breeding visitor, to northern Utah. We saw good numbers at the Great Salt Lake and smaller

numbers, in Bryce Canyon National Park.

American Avocet *Recurvirostra americana* Like the above species, the very attractive American Avocet, is predominantly a locally common summer breeding visitor. Which we saw very well at several wetlands we visited, in the Salt Lake area.

LAPWINGS and PLOVERS

Snowy Plover *Charadrius alexandrinus* In Utah, this species is an uncommon and highly localised summer breeding visitor, which breeds at the Great Salt Lake. We enjoyed very good, close looks, at a small flock, along the edge of the Great Salt Lake. This species is classified as Near Threatened by 'Birdlife International'. It is estimated that there are between 24,000-26,000 birds and unfortunately, they are decreasing rapidly.

Killdeer *Charadrius vociferus* This attractive species, is a common resident, which we saw well on many occasions.

SANDPIPERS and ALLIES

Spotted Sandpiper *Actitis macularius* This species is a fairly common summer breeding visitor to Utah. We saw a couple of bird, at a small reservoir in Little Immigration Canyon, just outside Salt Lake City. We also observed a single bird along the Sevier River at Panguitch.

Willet *Tringa semipalmata* This rather plain, New World wader, is an uncommon summer breeding visitor to the far north of Utah. We observed small numbers in the Bear River Migratory Bird Refuge and at the Chicken Creek Reservoir, close to Nephi.

Long-billed Curlew *Numenius americanus* This impressive looking wader, is also an uncommon breeding summer visitor, to the Great Salt Lake, in Utah. Where we saw good numbers of birds.

Long-billed Dowitcher *Limnodromus scolopaceus* This species is an uncommon passage migrant in Utah. We found a few large flocks at the Great Salt Lake, they were only seen in flight.

Wilson's Phalarope *Phalaropus tricolor* This very beautiful species is a common passage migrant throughout Utah. We encountered several small flocks, pirouetting on a few lakes we visited. **Alexander Wilson** (1766-1813) was a pioneering American ornithologist, and the first to study American birds in their native habitats. As such he is often called the Father of American Ornithology. Born in Scotland, Wilson was unfairly imprisoned for libel and following his release in 1794 he emigrated to the United States. From 1808-1813 he published seven volumes of his *American Ornithology*.

Red-necked Phalarope *Phalaropus lobatus* This species is a common passage migrant throughout Utah. We found many large flocks at the Great Salt Lake, they bobbed around on the lake, like mosquitoes on a mill pond.

GULLS

Franklin's Gull *Larus pipixcan* This attractive species is a common passage migrant throughout Utah. We observed good numbers of birds, many in magnificent full breeding plumage, during our time at the Great Salt Lake. Sir John **Franklin** (1786-1847) was an officer in the Royal Navy and is best known as an explorer of the Northwest Passage. The youngest of 12 boys, Franklin joined the navy in his youth and spent the rest of his life in its service. He undertook his first Arctic voyage in 1818, commanding a vessel trying to reach the North Pole. In 1819 he led his first attempt to find the Northwest Passage, the sea route across the Arctic to the Pacific Coast. He returned unsuccessfully after two years, amid rumours of starvation, murder and cannibalism. Franklin was involved in several more voyages to the north, before disappearing in 1845 in another attempt to cross the Arctic by sea. A search was undertaken under the command of Sir Clements Robert Markham. Vieillot named the gull which Wagler described.

Ring-billed Gull *Larus delawarensis* This species is a common passage migrant throughout Utah.

Large numbers were present at the Great Salt Lake, and we also saw a small number at Quail Creek Reservoir, at Hurricane.

California Gull *Larus californicus* The state bird of Utah, is a common summer breeding visitor throughout most of Utah. However, it is a breeding resident at the Great Salt Lake, where we saw huge numbers of birds. We also saw a few birds at Chicken Creek Reservoir, close to Nephi.

TERNs

Caspian Tern *Hydroprogne caspia* This very large species of tern, is an uncommon passage migrant in Utah. We saw small numbers at the Great Salt Lake and at Chicken Creek Reservoir, close to Nephi.

Forster's Tern *Sterna forsteri* Throughout most of Utah, this species is a fairly common passage migrant, and a summer breeding visitor in and around the Great Salt Lake. We observed small numbers at the Bear River Migratory Bird Refuge. **Johann Reinhold Forster** (1729-1798) was originally a clergyman in Danzig. He became a naturalist and accompanied James Cook, the famous British explorer of the Pacific Ocean, on his second voyage around the world from 1772 until 1773. This voyage extended further into Antarctic waters than anyone had previously reached. Forster discovered five new species of penguins. However, he gained a reputation as a constant complainer and troublemaker. His complaints of Cook continued after his return and became public, destroying Forster's career in England. He went to Germany and became a Professor of History and Mineralogy. Unpleasant and troublesome to the end, Forster refused to relinquish his notes of the voyage. They were not found and published until almost 50 years after his death.

PIGEONS and DOVES

Feral Pigeon *Columba livia* This introduced species was frequently encountered, in the villages and towns we visited.

Eurasian Collared-Dove *Streptopelia decaocto* This introduced species, is now an abundant resident throughout Utah, which we saw on most days of the tour.

White-winged Dove *Zenaida asiatica* In Utah, this uncommon species, only occurs in the far south, where it is spreading northwards, from Mexico. A bird of dense brushland, we saw it very well at Hurricane and again, in Monument Valley.

Mourning Dove *Zenaida macroura* A common and widespread resident of Utah, which we saw on almost every day of the tour.

Inca Dove *Columbina inca* In Utah, this uncommon species, only occurs in the far south, where it is spreading northwards, from Mexico. We saw it very well on one occasion, in the town of Hurricane.

CUCKOOS

Greater Roadrunner *Geococcyx californianus* An uncommon resident of dry, brushy habitat, in the far south of Utah. This rather bizarre looking, but fantastic species of ground-dwelling cuckoo; requires open ground, in order to run down its preferred prey, of lizards and snakes. It is even known to attack and kill rattlesnakes! We very much enjoyed our prolonged sighting of a single bird in Tonaquint Park, at St. George.

OWLS

Great Horned Owl *Bubo virginianus* A pair of these uncommon residents were observed extremely well, roosting in a barn on Antelope Island, in the Great Salt Lake.

Burrowing Owl *Athene cunicularia* An uncommon and localised summer breeding visitor, we observed a pair of birds, at their burrows on Antelope Island, in the Great Salt Lake.

SWIFTS

Vaux's Swift *Chaetura vauxi* This small species of swift, is a rare vagrant in Utah, so we were very fortunate that Nick pointed out a pair of birds flying above us during our time in the Matheson Wetland Preserve, at Moab. This species is an uncommon spring and autumn passage migrant, through California and Nevada, the two states immediately to the west of Utah, so the two birds had strayed a little to the east, and were heading for breeding grounds, further north along the Pacific coast. **William Sanson Vaux** (1811-1882) was a Philadelphia mineralogist and archaeologist, who served as President of the United States Zoological Society and Vice-President of the Academy of Natural Sciences, Philadelphia. During his life Vaux acquired an extensive mineralogical and archaeological collection, which he bequeathed to the Academy of Natural Sciences, together with a handsome endowment for their preservation. His friend **John Kirk Townsend** discovered the swift in 1835 and named it in Vaux's honour.

White-throated Swift *Aeronautes saxatalis* This attractive species of swift, is a common breeding summer visitor in Utah. We enjoyed many sightings high in the mountains, at regular intervals throughout the tour.

HUMMINGBIRDS

Black-chinned Hummingbird *Archilochus alexandri* This species of hummingbird is a common summer breeding visitor to Utah, where it is by far the commonest hummingbird in Utah. We saw it extremely well, on most days of the tour.

Broad-tailed Hummingbird *Selasphorus platycercus* This summer breeding visitor, is an uncommon species throughout the whole of Utah. We saw it well at Pine Valley and on Sand Island, in the San Juann River, at Bluff.

KINGFISHERS

Belted Kingfisher *Megaceryle alcyon* This very large species of kingfisher, is an uncommon but widespread resident throughout Utah. We only saw it on one occasion, when Nick pointed out a bird, sat along the edge of a small creek in Little Immigration Canyon, just outside Salt Lake City.

WOODPECKERS

Northern Flicker *Colaptes auratus* This large species of woodpecker, is a common and widespread resident throughout Utah, which we saw well on several occasions.

Ladder-backed Woodpecker *Picoides scalaris* This small species of woodpecker, just makes it into the southwest corner of Utah, where it is a fairly common resident. We saw a single adult male, very well, while birding in Tonaquint Park, at St. George.

Downy Woodpecker *Picoides pubescens* An uncommon resident of Utah, we saw it very well on the first day of the tour, at the feeders in Little Cottonwood Canyon, close to Salt Lake City, and then a second time, in the Manti - La Sal National Forest.

Hairy Woodpecker *Picoides villosus* This species is a common resident of mature forests, which we saw very well on a few occasions throughout the tour.

TYRANT FLYCATCHERS

Olive-sided Flycatcher *Contopus cooperi* In Utah, this species is a uncommon summer breeding visitor and passage migrant. We observed a single bird very well in the Matheson Wetland Preserve, at Moab.

Western Wood-Pewee *Contopus sordidulus* This rather drab species, is a common summer breeding visitor and passage migrant throughout Utah. We first saw this species in Monument Valley, and then we saw it a second time, on Sand Island, in the San Juann

River, at Bluff.

Willow Flycatcher *Empidonax traillii* This species is an uncommon breeding summer visitor throughout Utah. We saw it very well on one occasion, while birding in the Matheson Wetland Preserve, at Moab.

Dusky Flycatcher *Empidonax oberholseri* This species is also an uncommon breeding summer visitor to most of Utah. We saw it well along the Sevier River, at Panguitch, and then again, during our time in Monument Valley.

Hammond's Flycatcher *Empidonax hammondii* This species is an uncommon passage migrant throughout Utah. We observed a single bird at very close quarters, on Antelope Island, in the Great Salt Lake. **Dr. William Alexander Hammond** (1828-1900) was an American physician, naturalist and soldier. He joined the army as Assistant Surgeon in 1849. For the next ten years he served at various frontier stations, collecting all the while. In 1861 during the American Civil War he served as Surgeon-General of the United States Army. Unfortunately, he clashed with Edward Stranton, Secretary of War, and was court-martialed in 1864, but was later exonerated in 1878. Hammond collected birds for **Baird**, and arranged for **Xantus** to work with him. In return Xantus named the flycatcher in gratitude. An amphibian and a reptile are also named after him.

Gray Flycatcher *Empidonax wrightii* This species is predominantly an uncommon passage migrant throughout Utah, with small numbers staying to breed. We observed a breeding pair extremely well on the last day of the tour, along the Horse Canyon Road, close to Price.

Cordilleran Flycatcher *Empidonax occidentalis* This species is an uncommon summer breeding visitor to coniferous forests and canyons in the mountains of Utah. We saw a single individual particularly well in the Manti – La Sal National Forest, above Moab.

Black Phoebe *Sayornis nigricans* A widespread and common resident throughout the far south of Utah, wherever there is water. We saw it very well along the Virgin River in Zion National Park, and a second time, at the small pond in Tonaquint Park, at St. George.

Say's Phoebe *Sayornis saya* In Utah, this species is a common summer breeding visitor. We enjoyed many good sightings of this attractive species throughout the tour. **Thomas Say** (1787-1843) was a self-taught American naturalist and zoologist, whose primary interest was entomology. He described over 1,000 new species of beetles and over 400 new insects of other orders. He was the grandson of **John Bartram** and a friend of **Alexander Wilson**. He was appointed chief zoologist of the Jamar S H Long expedition, that explored the Rocky Mountains. Here he discovered several new species of birds, including the phoebe in 1820. Other new birds he discovered included Long-billed Dowitcher, Blue Grouse, Band-tailed Pigeon, Western Kingbird, Rock Wren, Orange-crowned Warbler, Lesser Goldfinch, Lark Sparrow and Lazuli Bunting. Say wrote *American Entomology* in 1824 and *Descriptions of the Insects of North America*, which was published between 1817 and 1828, and he also wrote *American Conchology* in 1830. His friend **Bonaparte** described and named the phoebe after him.

Ash-throated Flycatcher *Myiarchus cinerascens* This species is a common summer breeding visitor throughout Utah. We saw it very well, on many occasions.

Cassin's Kingbird *Tyrannus vociferans* This very uncommon summer breeding visitor, just creeps across the border into southeastern Utah. We were very fortunate to observe a single bird, very well, while birding in Monument Valley. **John Cassin** (1813-1869) was a Quaker businessman and the unpaid Curator of Ornithology at the Academy of Natural Sciences in Philadelphia, for over a quarter of a century. He is regarded as one of the giants of American ornithology. He described 198 species of birds, many of them from his own expeditions around the world. In addition to the auklet, he also has, a kingbird, a vireo, a sparrow, and a finch, all named in his honour.

Western Kingbird *Tyrannus verticalis* This species is a common summer breeding visitor

throughout Utah. We saw it very well on many occasions throughout the tour.

LARKS

Horned Lark *Eremophila alpestris* In Utah this species is an uncommon resident of expansive open ground, and barren, sparsely vegetated areas. We observed a small flock on Antelope Island, in the Great Salt Lake, and then had a second sighting of a few birds while birding amongst the ruins, in the Beethoven National Monument.

SWALLOWS

Tree Swallow *Tachycineta bicolor* An uncommon summer breeding visitor, and passage migrant throughout Utah. We observed a handful of birds at the Great Salt Lake, and a few more, in the Manti – La Sal National Forest, above Moab.

Violet-green Swallow *Tachycineta thalassina* This species is a common summer breeding visitor throughout Utah. We saw it very well, on numerous occasions throughout the more mountainous areas of Utah and Arizona.

Northern Rough-winged Swallow *Stelgidopteryx serripennis* This species is a fairly common summer breeding visitor throughout Utah. We first observed a few birds flying over Chicken Creek Reservoir, at Nephi, and then we saw a few more birds, during our time in Zion National Park.

Bank Swallow *Riparia riparia* In Utah, this species is an uncommon passage migrant in the southern half of the state and an uncommon summer breeding visitor to the northern half of the state. We were fortunate to enjoy good close looks at several small flocks, during our time in northern Utah.

Barn Swallow *Hirundo rustica* This attractive species is a common summer breeding visitor throughout Utah. We enjoyed many good sightings throughout the tour.

Cliff Swallow *Petrochelidon pyrrhonota* This beautiful species is an abundant summer breeding visitor throughout Utah. We enjoyed many good sightings throughout the tour.

KINGLETS

Golden-crowned Kinglet *Regulus satrapa* This attractive and diminutive species is an uncommon resident throughout Utah and northern Arizona. We glimpsed a single bird, while birding in the Grand Canyon National Park.

Ruby-crowned Kinglet *Regulus calendula* This much drabber species, is also an uncommon resident throughout Utah and northern Arizona. Once again, we glimpsed a single bird, while birding in the Grand Canyon National Park.

SILKY-FLYCATCHERS

Phainopepla *Phainopepla nitens* This elegant looking member of the silky-flycatcher family, is an uncommon summer breeding visitor, which just makes it across the border into the mesquite lowlands, of southwestern Utah. We saw this attractive species particularly well in the Brooks Nature Park, at St. George.

WAXWINGS

Cedar Waxwing *Bombcilla cedrorum* This very beautiful species is a fairly common resident throughout Utah. We observed several small flocks very well, throughout the course of the tour.

DIPPERS

American Dipper *Cinclus mexicanus* In Utah, this very special bird, is an uncommon resident of clear, fast-flowing mountain streams. We were very fortunate, to enjoy super looks at a pair

of birds, along the Virgin River, in Zion National Park.

WRENS

Bewick's Wren *Thryomanes bewickii* This species is a common resident of brushy habitats of southern Utah. We observed a pair of birds very well, while birding at the Quail Creek Reservoir, close to Hurricane. **Thomas Bewick** (1753-1823) was an English ornithologist and engraver; the best-known English illustrator of his generation. He never saw America but most natural history students, including **Audubon**, knew Bewick's work. Audubon met the elderly Bewick on his first trip to England in 1827 and honoured Bewick in naming after him a new wren, which he shot in Louisiana 16 years earlier. Audubon wrote of Bewick, '*A complete Englishman, full of life and energy, though now 74, very witty and clever, better acquainted with America than most of his countrymen, and an honour to England*'.

House Wren *Troglodytes aedon* This species is a common summer breeding visitor throughout Utah. We saw it very well, on several occasions throughout the tour.

Rock Wren *Salpinctes obsoletus* The Rock Wren is an uncommon resident throughout the far south of Utah, and an uncommon summer breeding visitor throughout the rest of Utah. We saw it very well on several occasions throughout the tour.

Canyon Wren *Catherpes mexicanus* This species is an uncommon resident throughout Utah. We saw it very well on one occasion, while birding at the Quail Creek Reservoir, close to Hurricane.

MOCKINGBIRDS and THRASHERS

Gray Catbird *Dunetella carolinensis* This attractive species is a fairly common summer breeding visitor to the far north of Utah. We saw a single bird on one occasion, while birding in the Little Immigration Canyon, not far from Salt Lake City.

Northern Mockingbird *Mimus polyglottos* This species is a common resident throughout southern Utah and a common summer breeding visitor throughout the northern half of the state. We saw it very well, on several occasions, throughout the tour.

Sage Thrasher *Oreoscoptes montanus* This species is an uncommon summer breeding visitor throughout Utah. We saw it well on a few occasions, throughout the tour.

THRUSHES and ALLIES

Mountain Bluebird *Sialia currucoides* This attractive species, is a breeding resident, in some of the higher mountains of northern and central Utah. In southern Utah, it is a fairly common winter visitor. We saw it very well, on numerous occasions throughout the tour.

Western Bluebird *Sialia mexicana* In Utah, this attractive species is a common resident and winter visitor. We observed a good number of birds, throughout the tour.

Townsend's Solitaire *Myadestes townsendi* This beautiful songster, is an uncommon resident throughout Utah. We saw it very well, on one occasion, in Brice Canyon National Park.

John Kirk Townsend (1809-1851) was an American naturalist, ornithologist and collector. He sent many specimens to **Audubon** who gave him free reign in naming anything which he found. These specimens included the solitaire and the bunting, which Audubon named after him. Apparently Townsend was going to name the warbler that he found, but learned that **Nuttall** had provisionally named it for him already, so he acknowledged his precedence.

American Robin *Turdus migratorius* This species is a common resident throughout Utah, which we observed on most days of the tour.

Hermit Thrush *Catharus guttatus* This species is an uncommon summer breeding visitor throughout Utah. We saw it fairly well on one occasion in the Manti – La Sal National Forest, above Moab.

GNATCATCHERS

Blue-gray Gnatcatcher *Polioptila caerulea* A common summer breeding visitor. We enjoyed a few scattered sightings, throughout the tour.

LONG-TAILED TITS

Bushtit *Psaltriparus minimus* A common resident of brushy woodland, we saw a few small flocks, at various locations throughout the tour.

CHICKADEES and TITS

Black-capped Chickadee *Poecile atricapillus* In Utah this species is an uncommon resident, which is right at the southern edge of its range. We observed a pair of birds very well in the Matheson Wetland Preserve, at Moab.

Mountain Chickadee *Poecile gambeli* In Utah this species is a common resident of montane aspen and conifer forests. We saw it very well, on many occasions throughout the tour.

Juniper Titmouse *Baeolophus ridgwayi* This range restricted species is an uncommon resident throughout Utah. We observed a single bird very well in the Canyonlands National Park.

NUTHATCHES

Pygmy Nuthatch *Sitta pygmaea* This species is an uncommon resident in Utah, we glimpsed a single bird on one occasion, in Brice Canyon National Park.

Red-breasted Nuthatch *Sitta canadensis* In Utah, this species is a fairly common resident and winter visitor. We glimpsed a single bird on one occasion, in Brice Canyon National Park.

White-breasted Nuthatch *Sitta carolinensis* This species is a common resident of mature forests. We observed it very well in Brice Canyon National Park and at Pine Valle.

CREEPERS

Brown Creeper *Certhia americana* In Utah, this species is an uncommon resident and winter visitor. We only saw it on one occasion, fortunately, we saw it very well, while birding in Brice Canyon National Park.

PENDULINE TITS

Verdin *Auriparus flaviceps* This attractive species, is an uncommon resident, in the brushy deserts of the extreme southwest corner of Utah. We saw a small flock very well in the Brooks Nature Park, at St. George.

SHRIKES

Loggerhead Shrike *Lanius ludovicianus* This uncommon resident, is a declining species of open pastures and prairies. We enjoyed several good sightings of this handsome species, at the Great Salt Lake.

JAYS, MAGPIES and CROWS

Pinyon Jay *Gymnorhinus cyanocephalus* This uncommon and irregular resident, occurs only in pinyon pine forests, and open pinyon-juniper woodland. We were very fortunate to find a pair of birds, on the last day of the tour, along Horse Canyon Road, near Price.

Steller's Jay *Cyanocitta stelleri* A common resident of coniferous and mixed woodland, which we saw well on many occasions. **Georg Wilhelm Steller** (1709-1746) was a German naturalist and explorer, in Russian service. He studied medicine at Halle, between 1731 and 1734, and was a physician in the Russian army in 1734. He became an assistant at the Academy of Sciences in St Petersburg in 1734 and accompanied Vitus Bering on his second expedition (1738-1742) to Alaska and Kamchatka. Between 1742 and 1744 he worked in Petropavlovsk but died on the return journey to St Petersburg. **John Latham**, the English

naturalist, first described the Steller's Jay in 1781 based on Steller's detailed journals and on a skin from Vancouver Island collected by Cook's expedition. Steller published a Journal of a Voyage with Bering 1741-1742, and in 1743. **Johann Gmelin** (1748-1804) named the jay in Steller's honour, from Latham's description. Steller also discovered the eagle and the eider.

Woodhouse's Scrub-Jay *Aphelocoma woodhouseii* This species is a fairly common resident, which we saw very well on a few occasions throughout the tour. **Samuel Washington Woodhouse** (1821-1904) was an American surgeon, explorer and naturalist, who collected in the USA. He was on the Sitgreaves exploration of the Colorado and Zuni Rivers (1852) with the joint roles of doctor and naturalist. He published his journals under the title *A Naturalist in Indian Territory; The Journal of S.W. Woodhouse, 1849-50*. An amphibian and a mammal are also named after him.

Black-billed Magpie *Pica hudsonia* A common resident of riparian woodland, which we saw very well, on numerous occasions throughout the tour.

American Crow *Corvus brachyrhynchos* A common resident, which we saw well on many occasions throughout the tour.

Common Raven *Corvus corax* This much larger species, is a very common resident throughout the whole of Utah. It was the only bird we observed on every single day of the tour.

STARLINGS

European Starling *Sturnus vulgaris* This introduced species was unfortunately observed on most days of the tour.

OLD WORLD SPARROWS

House Sparrow *Passer domesticus* Another introduced species, which we saw at regular intervals, in the towns and villages.

VIREOS and ALLIES

Gray Vireo *Vireo vicinior* This species is an uncommon summer breeding visitor, to southern Utah and Arizona. We saw a pair very well along the House Rock Valley Road, in Arizona. We saw a second pair while birding amongst the ruins in Hovenweep National Monument, in Utah.

Plumbeous Vireo *Vireo plumbeus* This species is an uncommon summer breeding visitor throughout Utah. We saw it very well on a few occasions during the tour.

Warbling Vireo *Vireo gilvus* This nondescript species, is a common summer breeding visitor throughout Utah. We saw it very well on several occasions, throughout the tour.

SISKINS, CROSSBILLS and ALLIES

Black Rosy-Finch *Leucosticte atrata* This species is a fairly common resident and winter visitor in Utah. We were very fortunate to observe a small flock of four birds at the bird feeders in Little Cottonwood Canyon. A late snow fall had forced the birds down to lower altitudes, which enabled us to see them.

Cassin's Finch *Carpodacus cassinii* In Utah, this species is an uncommon resident, of open pine forests, in the higher mountains. We saw a few small flocks during the tour.

House Finch *Carpodacus mexicanus* A common and widespread resident, which we saw well, on many occasions.

Pine Siskin *Spinus pinus* A common, but nomadic resident of Utah. We observed a few small flocks during the tour.

Lesser Goldfinch *Carduelis psaltria* A common summer breeding visitor, throughout Utah. We observed several small flocks throughout the tour.

American Goldfinch *Carduelis tristis* Predominantly a fairly common resident of Utah.

Somewhat surprisingly, we only observed this species on one occasion, while birding at Chicken Creek Reservoir, close to Nephi.

NEW WORLD WARBELRS

Orange-crowned Warbler *Vermivora celata* This species is an uncommon summer breeding visitor, which we saw well on one occasion, in the Manti – La Sal National Forest, above Moab.

Virginia's Warbler *Vermivora virginiae* An uncommon summer breeding visitor to Utah. We saw a pair of birds very well at the Shingle Creek Rest Area, at Glendale. We saw a second pair in the Manti - La Sal National Forest, above Moab. **Mary Virginia Childs Anderson** (1833-1912) was the wife of American army surgeon **Dr William Wallace Anderson**, who discovered the species in 1858.

Lucy's Warbler *Vermivora luciae* This species is an uncommon summer breeding visitor, which only occurs in the far south of Utah. We observed a pair in Brooks Nature Park, at St. George and a second pair, on Sand Island, in the San Juann River, at Bluff. **Lucy Hunter Baird** (1848-1913) was the only child of Spencer Baird, she was 13 when the warbler was named after her.

Yellow Warbler *Dendroica petechia* This attractive species is a common and widespread summer breeding visitor to Utah. We enjoyed many good sightings throughout the tour.

Audubon's Warbler *Dendroica auduboni* This very attractive species is a common summer breeding visitor, throughout Utah. We saw it well, on numerous occasions throughout the tour. **John James Audubon** 1785-1851 is remembered as the father of American ornithology and as a notable artist, collector and author. He gave several different account of his birth, but he was the illegitimate son of a French naval captain and French girl who worked at a sugar plantation in Dan Domingo, Haiti. Audubon's mother died within a short time of his birth so Audubon's father took him back to France as a young child where he was adopted by Captain Audubon and his legal wife. When he was a teenager Captain Audubon sent him to manage his plantation near Philadelphia. It was here that Audubon met and married, his wife Lucy, whose support proved critical in achieving his success. He succeeded only because he went to England, where his works were appreciated and subscribers made possible the publication of his monumental Birds of America, published in four volumes between 1827 and 1838.

Black-throated Gray Warbler *Dendroica nigrescens* This attractive species is a common summer breeding visitor throughout Utah. We saw several birds very well throughout the course of the tour.

Grace's Warbler *Dendroica graciae* This attractive species is an uncommon summer breeding visitor, to the southern half of Utah. We saw it well in Brice Canyon National Park and at Pine Valley. **Grace Darling Page** (1847-1925) was the sister of Dr Elliot Coues. She married Charles Albert Page in 1868, who was the United States Ambassador to Switzerland. The warbler was collected by Coues, who asked Baird to name it after his sister, who was 18 at the time.

Northern Waterthrush *Seiurus noveboracensis* This species is a vagrant to Utah. We were very fortunate that Nick pointed out one of these birds on Sand Island, in the San Juann River, at Bluff.

MacGillivray's Warbler *Oporornis tolmiei* This rather skulking species, is an uncommon summer breeding visitor to Utah. Unfortunately, I was the only person who saw this bird, during our time in the Manti – La Sal National Forest, above Moab. **William MacGillivray** (1795- 1851) was a Scottish artist and professor, who occupied the Regius Chair of Natural History at Marischal College in Aberdeen, in 1841. He grew up on Harris, in the outer Hebrides, and gained extensive knowledge of the fauna and flora of the Scottish

highlands, on field trips where he often walked hundreds of miles. He walked to London just to see the bird collection at the British Museum! He has been called 'the first ecologist'. He wrote a five volume 'History of British Birds', which he intended to illustrate with coloured plates based on his watercolours, but the great expense involved prevented him.

Common Yellowthroat *Geothlypis trichas* This species is a fairly common summer breeding visitor to Utah. It was observed briefly in Tonaquint Park, at St. George, and again, in the Matheson Wetland Preserve, at Moab.

Yellow-breasted Chat *Icteria virens* An uncommon summer breeding visitor to Utah. We observed a few individuals on Sand Island, in the San Juann River, at Bluff.

TANAGERS and ALLIES

Summer Tanager *Piranga rubra* A fairly common summer breeding visitor to the far south of Utah. We saw it well in Zion National Park and again on Sand Island, in the San Juann River, at Bluff.

Western Tanager *Piranga ludoviciana* This species is a common summer breeding visitor to Utah. We enjoyed many good sightings throughout the tour.

BUNTINGS, SPARROWS SEEDEATERS and ALLIES

Green-tailed Towhee *Pipilo chlorurus* This species is a fairly common summer breeding visitor, to high mountain brushland. We saw it very well in the Little Immigration Canyon, close to Salt Lake City, and in Bryce Canyon National Park.

Spotted Towhee *Pipilo maculatus* This very handsome species, is a common resident throughout Utah. We saw it well, on several occasions throughout the tour.

Abert's Towhee *Melospiza aberti* A common but localised resident of desert country, in the far southwest of Utah. We saw a small flock very well, while birding in the Tonaquint Park, in St. George. **James William Abert** (1820-1897) was a major in the US Army and an ornithologist. He graduated from Princeton in 1838, and then entered the US Military Academy. In 1845 he joined Fremont's third expedition, whose assignment was 'to make reconnaissance southward and eastward along the Canadian River, through the country of Kiowa and Comanche'. Fremont (who was obviously no fool) chose to take his main party on to California, and gave command of the Canadian River expedition, into Kiowa and Comanche country, to Abert. The expedition followed the headwaters of the Canadian River through eastern New Mexico and into the Texas Panhandle. In his report Abert described in detail the geology, and flora and fauna of the Canadian Valley and mapped the area. A short time later, he fought in the American Civil War, but soon after the end of the war, he was severely injured in a fall from his horse, which led to his resignation from the army. He then taught English literature at the University of Missouri, until his death in 1897.

Chipping Sparrow *Spizella passerina* This species is a common summer breeding visitor, to Utah. We saw it well on many occasions throughout the tour.

Brewer's Sparrow *Spizella breweri* In Utah, this species is a fairly common summer breeding visitor. We saw it well on a number of occasions throughout the tour. **Dr. Thomas Mayo Brewer** (1814-1880) was an American naturalist and ornithologist. Brewer co-wrote *The History of North American Birds* in 1857. He also has two species of mammals named after him.

Vesper Sparrow *Pooecetes gramineus* This species of sparrow, is an uncommon summer breeding visitor to Utah. We observed a single bird, at Henifer, while admiring the Sage Grouse lek.

Lark Sparrow *Chondestes grammacus* This attractive species of sparrow, is a common summer breeding visitor to Utah. We saw it very well, at regular intervals throughout the tour.

Black-throated Sparrow *Amphispiza bilineata* A fairly common summer breeding visitor to arid

patches of brush and cactus, in the desert country of Utah. We saw it very well on several occasions.

Sagebrush Sparrow *Artemisiospiza nevadensis* A recent split from Sage Sparrow; this species is an uncommon summer breeding visitor to Utah and northern Arizona. We managed to coax one into view along the House Rock Valley Road, in Arizona.

Lark Bunting *Calamospiza melanocorys* A vagrant to Utah, we were very fortunate to enjoy superb close looks, at an adult male, in the Bear River Migratory Bird Refuge, close to Salt Lake City.

Savannah Sparrow *Passerculus sandwichensis* This rather plain species of New World sparrow, is a fairly common breeding summer visitor to Utah. Somewhat surprisingly, we saw a single adult male, while birding at the Great Salt Lake.

Slate-colored Fox Sparrow *Passerella schistacea* The Fox Sparrow has recently been split in to four separate species, the species we saw is now known as Slate-colored Fox Sparrow. It is a fairly common passage migrant in Utah. We saw a single bird at the bird feeders in Little Cottonwood Canyon, close to Salt Lake City, and then we saw another single bird in Little Immigration Canyon, also close to Salt Lake City.

Song Sparrow *Melospiza melodia* A common and widespread resident, which we saw very well, on several occasions.

White-crowned Sparrow *Zonotrichia leucophrys* There is a resident race of this species in the northern part of Utah, and it is a winter visitor in the southern half of the state. It is an attractive bird, which we saw well, on several occasions, in the Salt Lake area.

Dark-eyed Junco *Junco hyemalis* This abundant species, is a resident in Utah. We saw it well, on several occasions throughout the tour.

SALTATORS, CARDINALS and ALLIES

Black-headed Grosbeak *Pheucticus melanocephalus* This very attractive species, is a common summer breeding visitor to Utah, which we saw well, on many occasions.

Blue Grosbeak *Passerina caerulea* The males of this species are particularly handsome; it is an uncommon summer breeding visitor, which only occurs in the far south of Utah. We saw it well, in the Tonaquint Park, at St. George, and again in the Matheson Wetland Preserve, at Moab.

Lazuli Bunting *Passerina amoena* Yet another particularly handsome species, which is a fairly common summer breeding visitor to Utah, which we saw very well on a few occasions.

TROUPIALS and ALLIES

Red-winged Blackbird *Agelaius phoeniceus* This very attractive species, is an abundant resident throughout Utah, which we saw well on many occasions.

Western Meadowlark *Sturnella neglecta* A common resident throughout Utah, which we saw very well on several occasions.

Yellow-headed Blackbird *Xanthocephalus xanthocephalus* A fairly common summer breeding visitor to Utah. It proved to be common around the Great Salt Lake and the Bear River Migratory Bird Refuge. We also saw a few at a small reservoir in Little Immigration Canyon, close to Salt Lake City.

Brewer's Blackbird *Euphagus cyanocephalus* A common resident throughout Utah, which we saw on many days of the tour. **Dr. Thomas Mayo Brewer** (1814-1880) was an American naturalist and ornithologist. Brewer co-wrote the History of North American Birds in 1857.

Great-tailed Grackle *Quiscalus mexicanus* A common summer breeding visitor to Utah. Which we saw well on numerous occasions.

Brown-headed Cowbird *Molothrus ater* This nest parasite, is a common summer breeding visitor to Utah, which we saw very well, on several occasions.

Hooded Oriole *Icterus cucullatus* This attractive species, is an extremely rare summer breeding visitor to the extreme southwest corner of Utah. We observed a breeding pair at a known nestingsite, in the suburbs of Hurricane.

Bullock's Oriole *Icterus bullockii* Another attractive species, it is a fairly common summer breeding visitor to Utah. We saw it well on many occasions throughout the tour. **William Bullock** (1773-1849) was an English traveller and amateur naturalist, and a former goldsmith. He established a travelling museum in London with 3,000 skins and 32,000 other curiosities that he had collected. He auctioned them off in 1819. He collected a number of specimens new to science. His friend **Swainson**, to whom he sold many specimens, named the oriole in his honour, from a bird which Bullock collected whilst visiting one of his gold mines, near Mexico City.

MAMMALS

Mountain Cottontail *Sylvilagus nuttallii* Seen well, on one occasion, in the Little Immigration Canyon, close to Salt Lake City.

Desert Cottontail *Sylvilagus audubonii* The common cottontail of low valleys, open plains, and foothills. We saw it well, in Tonaquint Park, at St. George, and in Canyonlands National Park.

Black-tailed Jackrabbit *Lepus californicus* This large species of hare, was seen well on one occasion, in the Bear River Migratory Bird Refuge, close to Salt Lake City.

Musk Rat *Ondatra zibethicus* This aquatic rodent was observed well, in the Bear River Migratory Bird Refuge, and again in the Tonaquint Park, in St. George.

Yellow-bellied Marmot *Marmota flaviventris* This large chunky squirrel, was observed well in the Little Immigration Canyon, and at Pine Valley.

North American Red Squirrel *Tamiasciurus hudsonicus* This small species of squirrel, was seen briefly in the Grand Canyon National Park.

Utah Prairie Dog *Cynomys parvidens* The Utah Prairie Dog, is actually a ground frequenting squirrel, and is classified as 'Endangered' on the IUCN Red List. It is limited in distribution to the southwestern corner of Utah. From a population of 90,000 individuals, unrestricted trapping and poisoning has brought the population down to less than 3,300. We saw them very well in Bryce National Park, which has now become a haven for this once common species.

Rock Squirrel *Spermophilus variegatus* This ground frequenting squirrel, was seen well, on many occasions throughout the tour. One even sat on Christine's lap in Zion National Park! Much to Christine's dismay, I might add.

Uinta Ground Squirrel *Spermophilus armatus* Endemic to Utah and northern Arizona, our only observation occurred in Little Immigration Canyon, close to Salt Lake City.

Golden Mantled Ground Squirrel *Spermophilus lateralis* This widespread species, proved to be common in Bryce Canyon National Park.

White-tailed Antelope Squirrel *Ammospermophilus leucurus* A small species of striped ground-squirrel. While driving to Canyonlands National Park, one of these squirrels, ran across the road in front of our vehicle.

Least Chipmunk *Tamias minimus* Small, alert, ground-dwelling squirrels; chipmunks are very territorial and they are often seen chasing each other, in order to defend their burrows, or food caches. It is the smallest of all the chipmunks, we found large numbers, scattered throughout the tour.

Uinta Chipmunk *Tamias umbrinus* Unlike other species of chipmunk, this one often climbs trees, and also, holds its tail horizontal while running on the ground. We saw a few very well, in the Grand Canyon National Park.

- Cliff Chipmunk** *Tamias dorsalis* As the name would suggest, this species occurs around rocky areas and cliff faces. We saw small numbers in Monument Valley, and in the Hovenweep National Monument.
- Coyote** *Canis latrans* Coyotes are active day and night, and usually hunt alone. Their main prey are rabbits, hares, mice, and ground squirrels. We enjoyed a couple of good sightings of this attractive mammal, along the House Rock Valley Road and in Monument Valley. Wherever ground squirrels are plentiful, Coyotes are never far away. Its population is continuing to increase, despite trapping, shooting and poisoning, by ranchers.
- Red Fox** *Vulpes vulpes* During a spot of pre-breakfast birding along the Sevier River at Panguitch, we watched one of these animals patrolling a patch of farmland.
- Pronghorn** *Antilocapra americana* North Americas only antelope. A species of the arid plains of the American West. It can reach over 80 kilometres per hours, and is one of the fastest mammals in the Western Hemisphere, and one of the fastest in the world. At one time, numbers of this species in the United States got down to as low as 21 individuals. With protection it is now making a comeback, and it was very pleasing to observe several small herds of this beautiful species.
- American Bison** *Bison bison* Classified as 'Near Threatened' on the IUCN Red List. During the 1880s this huge species of bison, was reduced from tens of millions, to as few as 1,000 individuals. It is now a protected species, and numbers are slowly increasing. We observed a very large herd, on Antelope Island, in the Great Salt Lake.
- Elk** *Cervus elaphus* Known as Red Deer in Eurasia, we saw a small number in Little Immigration Canyon, close to Salt Lake City.
- Moose** *Alces alces* We saw a small number in Little Immigration Canyon, close to Salt Lake City.
- Mule Deer** *Odocoileus henionus* The Mule Deer lives in the mountains, plains, and deserts of the western United States. It spends the summer months high in the mountains, and retreats to the lowland valleys, during the winter months. We saw good numbers at various localities throughout the tour.