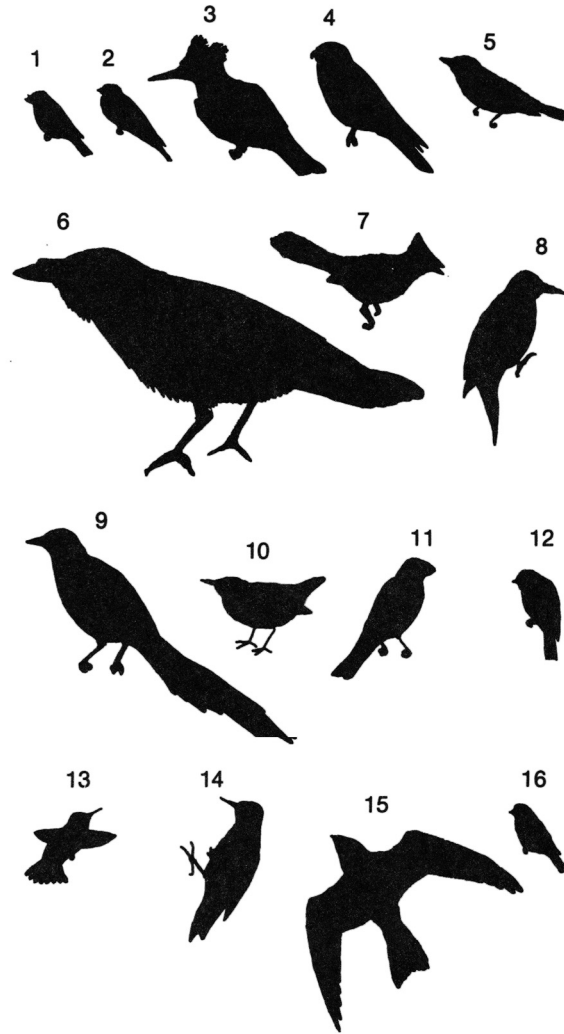


Birds indigenous to this area: The chart lists birds that have been seen according to the season found. Most have been seen in the picnic areas, but many have been seen along the hiking trails across US 34 from the picnic areas. Variations can occur which influence where or when birds are seen including seasons, commonality, and habits. Common birds are listed with an asterisk (*) to aid your bird watching. **How many have you seen?:**

Summer	Winter	All Year
Mtn. Bluebird	Oregon Junco*	Black Capped Chickadee*
Mourning Dove*	Slate Junco*	Mtn. Chickadee*
Lesser Goldfinch	Brown Creeper	Red Crossbill
Black Headed Grosbeak*	Clark's Nutcracker	Dipper*
Evening Grosbeak*	Cedar Waxwing	Golden Eagle
Sparrow Hawk*		Red-shafted Flicker*
Broad Tailed Hummingbird*		Gray Jay
Belted Kingfisher*		Stellar's Jay*
Common Nighthawk*		Gray-headed Junco*
Brewer's Blackbird		Blue Grouse
Lazuli Bunting		Black-billed Magpie*
Western Wood Pewee*		Red-breasted Nuthatch
Robin*		White-breasted Nuthatch*
Violet-green Swallow*		Great Horned Owl*
Western Tanager*		Common Raven*
Brown Thrasher		White-crowned Sparrow
Hermit Thrush		Starling
Green-tailed Towhee		Rufous-sided Towhee*
Canyon Wren		Downy Woodpecker
House Wren*		Hairy Woodpecker*
Black-throated Gray Warbler		Rock Pigeon
Canada Goose		Mallard
Great Blue Heron		Ring-necked Pheasant
Osprey		Bald Eagle

Silhouette and Size Comparisons



KEY

- | | |
|-------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1. Mountain Chickadee | 9. Black-billed Magpie |
| 2. Violet-green Swallow | 10. Dipper |
| 3. Belted Kingfisher | 11. Black-headed Grosbeak |
| 4. Sparrow Hawk | 12. Mountain Bluebird |
| 5. Western Tanager | 13. Broad-tailed Hummingbird |
| 6. Common Raven | 14. Hairy Woodpecker |
| 7. Steller's Jay | 15. Common Nighthawk |
| 8. Red-shafted Flicker | 16. Gray-headed Junco |

Continued Inside...

For further information about birds in the area, please contact the Mountain Parks Office at (970) 667-5181.

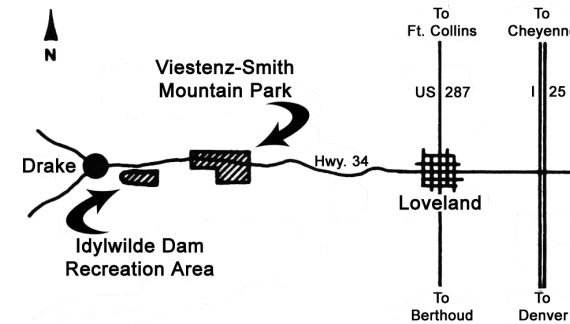
Some excerpts and images courtesy of "Peterson Field Guides - Western Birds" by Roger Tory Peterson.

Helpful Field Guides:

"Birds of North America" A Golden Guide to Field Identification by Robbins, Bruun, Zim, Singer.

"A Field Guide to Western Birds" Roger Tory Peterson.

"The Audobon Society Field Guide to North American Birds" by Udvardy and Rayfield.



All plants, animals, and other natural features are protected by park regulation against removal, destruction, and injury. It is a violation of Federal and State Laws to harass or injure any bird or to disturb any bird nests.

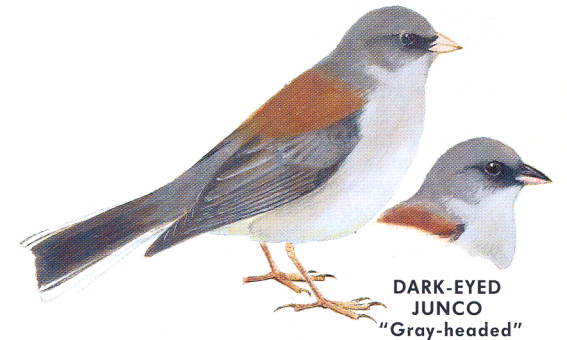
Please observe posted hours, and rules & regulations of the park. For further general park info, or to inquire about a reservation for an area in the park, please call the Admin. Office at (970) 962-2727.



Provided by the City of Loveland
Parks and Recreation Department
Mountain Parks Division
www.CityofLoveland.org

Birds

of Viestenz-Smith Mountain Park in the Big Thompson Canyon Loveland, Colorado



An Introduction to Common Birds of the Area

Continued from other side...



BELTED KINGFISHER- Common along rivers and lakes during the summer in our area, this fisher is most often seen perched motionless on power lines, or limbs over the river, scanning the water for a meal. If a meal is spotted, the Kingfisher will dive headfirst into the water for it! This 12 inch long bird can be recognized by its unusually large head with a rough, irregular crest on top, its long beak, and its very short legs. The head, crest, back, wings, and chest are bluish-gray, while its neck and belly are white. The Kingfisher calls as it flies, a loud, rattling scream which is faster and more irregular than the flight call of the Stellar's Jay.

BLACK BILLED MAGPIE- These scavengers, although common in the area, are infrequent visitors to the picnic ground because they prefer to avoid people. Magpies are easy to identify. Look for an 18 inch long black bird having white wing patches and a white belly, whose tail is longer than its body. It is the only bird in the region with a tail longer than its body. The long tails give them the appearance while flying of being slow and awkward, but don't be deceived. When their sharp eyes spot some carrion, they speed in to get their share, often chasing away other scavengers.

BLACK HEADED GROSBEAK-

This picnic area visitor is very similar to the very common Robin, but they aren't related. They both have a dark back and an orange-colored breast, and both are about 8 inches long from tail to beak. It has a thick, heavy duty beak for cracking seeds, white stripes on the tops of its wings, and yellow-orange coloration on the undersides of its wings. Their habits differ also. Robins eat insects and worms, while Grosbeaks use the beaks they were named after to crack seed shells.



BROAD TAILED HUMMINGBIRD- These 3½ inch long, distinctive birds, along with the very dissimilar Nuthatches, are the smallest birds in the area. It has a bright green back, white underside, red throat, and like all hummingbirds, has a long, thin bill to reach nectar

deep inside tubular shaped flowers. This hummingbird beats its wings so fast that it makes a shrill, metallic whistling sound as it flies. It hovers while feeding, and can even fly backwards.



COMMON NIGHTHAWK- are not really hawks, though in flight they resemble small falcons. They are usually insect eaters closely related to the Whip-poor-will in the Eastern United States. Nighthawks are very common in the area, appearing just before dark to feed.

Occasionally, they can be seen during the day along the upper parts of the Summit Trail. During daylight, look for a 9 inch long bird with very long, slender, pointed wings and slightly forked tail. The birds are mottled brown with small white patches on their throat, on the wings near the tips, and on their tail feathers. After dark, listen for sharp, nasal "peent".

COMMON RAVEN-

are the largest birds that come into the picnic areas, and it can only be mistaken at a long distance for a hawk. Ravens, cousins to crows, are 21 inches long, heavy bodied, all black scavengers with heavy bills, and wedge-shaped tails. Although they are seen nearly every day in the picnic ground waiting for someone to carelessly drop picnic waste, Ravens feed primarily on carrion. Their call is a deep, hoarse croak, but they can produce a throaty cluck, too.



DIPPER- is also known as the Ouzel (OOOO-zul), and is a 5-6 inch long, chubby looking bird. It can be seen along rivers and streams in the area. This dull grey-black short-tailed bird is the only bird that bobs its whole body up and down while it stands, hence the name "Dipper". It is also unique because it can walk under water in search of aquatic insects and it can swim on the surface like a duck.

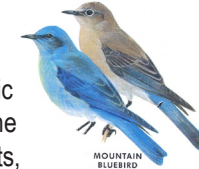
GRAY-HEADED JUNCO- are small 4-5 inch long sparrow-like, grey birds with rusty-red shoulders. They usually congregate in small flocks, searching bare ground,

in the open or under shrub thickets, for seeds. These residents are quite common in the picnic area and along the Foothills Nature Trail and Summit Trail throughout the year, and are especially noticeable during the winter.

HAIRY WOODPECKER- are common residents in this area, and are more typical than the Red-shafted Flicker because they actually peck into trees in search of insects. Follow the sound of the pecking, and you will usually find the 7½ inch long bird clinging to the side of a tree. They are black with white stripes above and below the eyes, a white throat and belly, a white back and white stripes on the wings. Males have a red patch on the back of the head. A local cousin, the Downy Woodpecker is similar but 2 inches shorter.

MOUNTAIN BLUEBIRD-

a 6 inch long delicate bird that has been seen at times in the picnic area, but is more common up on the Summit Trail. As the name suggests, the adult male is a striking sky-blue over most of their body, while the females are brownish-grey with blue only on the tops of their wings. These birds often are seen flying in-place a few feet off the ground looking for insects.



MOUNTAIN CHICKADEE- This sparrow-like 4½ inch long bird is most often seen in evergreen trees along the Foothills Nature Trail and Summit Trail. They have a tan/grey body, black throat and chin, a black cap on their head, and white stripes above and below each eye. Their cousin in this area, the Black-capped Chickadee, does not have the white stripe above each eye, but is similar in every other way.

RED-SHAFTED FLICKER- This type of woodpecker is 11 inches long with a brown cap, grey throat, red "moustache" on each side of its bill, black breast band below the throat, and dark spots on a white belly. The tops of its wings and its back are a mottled brown, and its most visible marks are its red feathers on the underside of its wings and tail. The name "Flicker" comes from its flight pattern. It "flicks" its wings a few times, glides downward in a short arc, then pulls up before "flicking" its wings again. They often make a nuisance of themselves by drilling into wood buildings under the eaves of roofs in

search of nesting sites. Flickers are often seen on the ground eating ants.

SPARROW HAWK- is a falcon; streamlined hawk with long pointed wings and a tail that narrows towards the end. The Sparrow Hawk is the smallest falcon, 9 inches long with a 22 inch wingspan. It has a rust-colored cap and back, a white face with a black streak down from the back of its beak, and a rust-colored tail. It hunts from poles or trees and often hovers 20-30 feet above ground. Its call is a sharp "killy, killy, killy".



STELLER'S JAY- is probably the most noticeable bird in the picnic area throughout the year. These 11 inch long residents have a prominent

black crest on top of their head, a black head with white streaks on the face and chin, black shoulders, and dark blue over the rest of the body. Their call is a hoarse low-pitched, short scream in a series of three when standing, breaking into a "ratta-tat-tat" type pattern when flying. They can also imitate hawks' screams expertly. Steller's Jays are scavengers, feeding on picnic waste and carrion, but PLEASE DON'T leave a mess for their sake.



VIOLET-GREEN SWALLOW- are small, delicate insect eaters, and are common to site in the picnic area in the summer, usually seen perched in

groups on power lines. They are 4-5 inches long, have long slender pointed wings, and have a conspicuously notched tail. They have a brown cap and dark wingtips and tail, violet-green shoulders, and black and white chest, belly, and flanks. Like all swallows, they flap their wings quickly, expertly chasing and catching insects in flight.

WESTERN Tanager- a colorful, Robin-sized bird which is present every summer in the picnic area and along trails, but has never been abundant locally. The male Tanagers have a bright red head and face, bright yellow body, black tail, and black wings streaked with white. Females have similar wings and tail, but are drab yellow everywhere else. Their beaks are heavier than a Robin's, but not as heavy as a Grosbeak's. Male Tanagers usually sing from the topmost branches of trees.