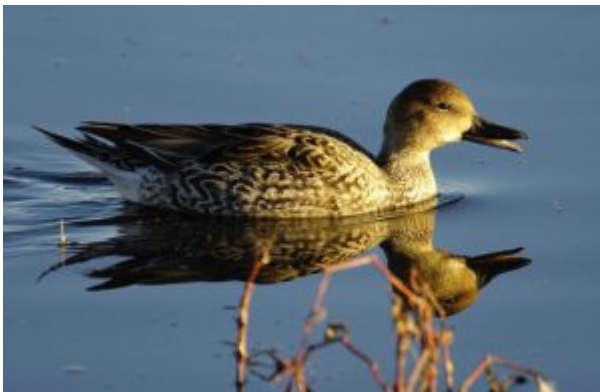


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Highlights from October 15 Bird Walk to the Wheat Ridge Greenbelt – Evergreen Audubon

3-4 minutes



Northern Pintail. All photos courtesy of Bill Schmoker.

Fifteen of us had a truly wonderful morning at the Wheat Ridge Greenbelt. The Virginia Creeper and the Skunkbush were red, the Peach-leaved Willow, and the cottonwoods were yellow, and the grasses were a multitude of different shades from green to yellow to ochre to maroon. As for the birds, we had enough to keep us busy, and ended up tallying 32 species.

A few of the interesting absences were: **Great Blue Heron** (their numbers start to drop around mid-October, but there will be some around all winter), ditto for **Black-crowned Night-Heron**, and while **Double-crested Cormorants** should be here through mid-November, we saw none.

We did get to see a lot of ducks, the highlight perhaps being a couple of **Northern Pintail**. Here's a female with her elegant neck and slightly long tail.



Cooper's Hawk

We also had a **Cooper's Hawk** circle above us briefly, but long enough to note the long, banded, rounded tail; and the plentiful, white, undertail coverts. We also noted the stiff, forceful wingbeats of the Cooper's, which was gliding and flapping intermittently. This is a composite shot of one individual.

The real highlight of the morning for me was finding a pair of foraging **Wilson's Snipe** that stayed out in the open for maybe twenty minutes or more. It's always a good day when you get nice long looks at snipe.





Wilson's Snipe

Remember to get ready for feeding the birds this winter by participating in Evergreen Audubon's seed sale – [orders may be placed online](#).

Order and pay by Oct 21, and pick up seed at the Chapter Meeting, Nov 3.

Good birding!!

Chuck Aid, Director of Bird Monitoring

Wheat Ridge Greenbelt, Oct 15, 2016

32 species

- Canada Goose (*Branta canadensis*) 64
- Gadwall (*Anas strepera*) 58
- American Wigeon (*Anas americana*) 7
- Mallard (*Anas platyrhynchos*) 56
- Northern Shoveler (*Anas clypeata*) 6
- Northern Pintail (*Anas acuta*) 2
- Green-winged Teal (*Anas crecca*) 5
- Bufflehead (*Bucephala albeola*) 3
- Hooded Merganser (*Lophodytes cucullatus*) 2
- Pied-billed Grebe (*Podilymbus podiceps*) 2

- American White Pelican (*Pelecanus erythrorhynchos*) 1
- Cooper's Hawk (*Accipiter cooperii*) 1
- Red-tailed Hawk (*Buteo jamaicensis*) 2
- American Coot (*Fulica americana*) 16
- Wilson's Snipe (*Gallinago delicata*) 2
- Ring-billed Gull (*Larus delawarensis*) 30
- Belted Kingfisher (*Megaceryle alcyon*) 3
- Downy Woodpecker (*Picoides pubescens*) 2
- Northern Flicker (*Colaptes auratus*) 4
- American Kestrel (*Falco sparverius*) 1
- Blue Jay (*Cyanocitta cristata*) 5
- Black-billed Magpie (*Pica hudsonia*) 8
- American Crow (*Corvus brachyrhynchos*) 5
- Black-capped Chickadee (*Poecile atricapillus*) 5
- American Robin (*Turdus migratorius*) 1
- European Starling (*Sturnus vulgaris*) 2
- White-crowned Sparrow (*Zonotrichia leucophrys*) 1
- Song Sparrow (*Melospiza melodia*) 3
- Red-winged Blackbird (*Agelaius phoeniceus*) 65
- House Finch (*Haemorhous mexicanus*) 8
- American Goldfinch (*Spinus tristis*) 1
- House Sparrow (*Passer domesticus*) 1