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## Highlights From August 2 Bird Walk on the Captain Mountain Trail – Evergreen Audubon

4-5 minutes

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American Three-toed Woodpecker (c) Bill Schmoker

Well, you might not have been able to even hear a pin drop as eight of us started up the trail at 7:20 on Wednesday morning. Like a scene from a bad 1950's western, it was "too quiet." We strained to hear a few distant calls that were almost indecipherable, and hopped on any passing butterfly as a possible member of the avian corps. Slowly, bird by bird, we began to pick up on a little bit of action, but we were really having to work hard, and at the end of the first hour we may have had

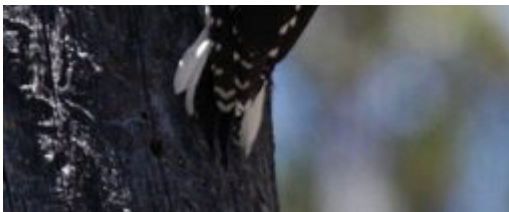
7-8 species. Fortunately, being hardcore Evergreen Audubon members we persevered through a few spells of bad anecdotes from the trip leader and others, and eventually tallied 23 species, having had some very special sightings (see list below).



Golden-crowned Kinglet (c) Bill Schmoker

Before getting to the highlights, I want to point out one species that we didn't see, though we did eventually have a couple of flyovers. Where are the Western Bluebirds this summer? We were in a great area of Ponderosa woodland, where the trees are widely spaced, and where historically there have been lots of bluebirds – this year, nothing. And, this has generally been true for a number of areas I've visited this breeding season. I'm hoping that some of you can tell me that they're all hanging out over at Hiwan or Genesee, because I keep striking out wherever I'm going.





American Three-toed Woodpecker (c) Bill Schmoker

So, on to our highlights. If you walk in on the Captain Mountain Trail about 1.5 miles, you'll come to tiny Pedee Creek. The trail does not spend any time here, but quickly crosses up into a huge montane meadow with a scattering of shrubs and rock outcroppings (think Green-tailed Towhee habitat). However, if you go there, unlike the trail, you should not head into the meadow but rather follow the creek downstream and you'll pick up on an old road that runs for almost a mile through great coniferous riparian habitat (think Golden-crowned Kinglet). We did think, "Golden-crowned Kinglet," and we were rewarded for doing so. We did not get great looks, but it's gratifying to know that they are in there, and something to keep in mind should you venture that way.

And, then, very close at hand we heard short little woodpecker tappings with long quiet intervals. A bit of sleuthing disclosed a family of American Three-toed Woodpeckers. We had great looks, and later got to hear the characteristic territorial drumming (Hermit Thrush singing in the background of this recording).

### Audio Player

Breeding season is winding down, hence the advent of some quieter mornings, but there is still some really cool stuff going on, so I encourage you to get out and play bird detective. The current action at my house consists primarily of a slew of hummingbirds

and an attentive male Black-headed Grosbeak feeding his two fledglings (not sure what happened to mom).

Good birding, Chuck

Captain Mountain Trail, Aug 2, 2017

23 species

Mourning Dove (*Zenaida macroura*) 2

Broad-tailed Hummingbird (*Selasphorus platycercus*) 6

Hairy Woodpecker (Rocky Mts.) (*Picoides villosus orius/icastus*)  
1

American Three-toed Woodpecker (*Picoides dorsalis*) 3

Northern Flicker (Red-shafted) (*Colaptes auratus* [cafer Group])  
6

Western Wood-Pewee (*Contopus sordidulus*) 3

Gray Jay (*Perisoreus canadensis*) 3

Steller's Jay (Interior) (*Cyanocitta stelleri* [diademata Group]) 8

Clark's Nutcracker (*Nucifraga columbiana*) 4

Common Raven (*Corvus corax*) 2

Mountain Chickadee (*Poecile gambeli*) 7

Red-breasted Nuthatch (*Sitta canadensis*) 4

White-breasted Nuthatch (*Sitta carolinensis*) 2

Pygmy Nuthatch (*Sitta pygmaea*) 6

Brown Creeper (*Certhia americana*) 3

House Wren (*Troglodytes aedon*) 1

Golden-crowned Kinglet (*Regulus satrapa*) 5

Western Bluebird (*Sialia mexicana*) 2

American Robin (*Turdus migratorius*) 1

Chipping Sparrow (*Spizella passerina*) 4

Dark-eyed Junco (Gray-headed) (*Junco hyemalis caniceps*) 5

Green-tailed Towhee (*Pipilo chlorurus*) 1

Pine Siskin (*Spinus pinus*) 2