

[evergreenaudubon.org](https://www.evergreenaudubon.org)

Highlights from February 18 Bird Walk to Harriman and Hine Lakes – Evergreen Audubon

3-4 minutes

Fourteen of us spent most of the morning at Harriman Lake, and then afterward we stopped off briefly at nearby Hine Lake (Robert A. Easton Regional Park). The water was totally open at both lakes, and the weather was unseasonably mild.

At Harriman we tallied 25 species (see list below) with highlights being a nice mixed flock of juncos (including two White-winged Juncos), a single male Canvasback, and a lone Prairie Falcon (photos courtesy of Bill Schmoker).

Moving on to Hine Lake, we picked up some Cackling Geese, and then we were most fortunate to see several Greater Scaup, which are an uncommon wintering bird in the interior of the continent, preferring salt water along both coasts. However, they have been occurring regularly in the Littleton area over the past three winters, and we were able to see nine of them.

Distinguishing Greater Scaup from Lesser Scaup, which occur regularly here in the winter, is one of the trickier IDs, and I hope our group didn't tire of my trying to point out some of the distinguishing characteristics. Among these, head-shape is a key

factor.

In the photos below note how the three Greater Scaup have more rounded, longer heads, with eyes closer to the top of their heads. The single Lesser Scaup, on the other hand, has a more pointy head with an obvious corner towards the rear of the head, and the eye appears to not be as close to the top of the head. I have spent hours working on the finer points of distinguishing these two species, and you can too if you get on over to Hine Lake or Blackrock Lake at South Platte Park, two of the most likely places for seeing them.



Lesser Scaup (Photo courtesy of Bill Schmoker)



Greater Scaup (Photo courtesy of Arthur Grosset)

Good birding to you all,

Chuck Aid

Harriman Lake Park, Feb 18, 2017

25 species (+5 other taxa)

Canada Goose (*Branta canadensis*) 85

Mallard (*Anas platyrhynchos*) 5

Canvasback (*Aythya valisineria*) 1

Redhead (*Aythya americana*) 9

Ring-necked Duck (*Aythya collaris*) 10

Lesser Scaup (*Aythya affinis*) 4

Bufflehead (*Bucephala albeola*) 21

Common Goldeneye (*Bucephala clangula*) 12

Hooded Merganser (*Lophodytes cucullatus*) 6

Common Merganser (*Mergus merganser*) 1

Pied-billed Grebe (*Podilymbus podiceps*) 2

American Coot (*Fulica americana*) 4

Ring-billed Gull (*Larus delawarensis*) 1

Rock Pigeon (Feral Pigeon) (*Columba livia* (Feral Pigeon)) 4

Eurasian Collared-Dove (*Streptopelia decaocto*) 15

Northern Flicker (*Colaptes auratus*) 5

Prairie Falcon (*Falco mexicanus*) 1

Blue Jay (*Cyanocitta cristata*) 1

Black-billed Magpie (*Pica hudsonia*) 6

American Crow (*Corvus brachyrhynchos*) 22

American Robin (*Turdus migratorius*) 18

European Starling (*Sturnus vulgaris*) 10

Dark-eyed Junco (*Junco hyemalis*) 5

Dark-eyed Junco (Slate-colored) (*Junco hyemalis*)

hyemalis/carolinensis) 1

Dark-eyed Junco (Oregon) (*Junco hyemalis* [oreganus Group]) 2

Dark-eyed Junco (Pink-sided) (*Junco hyemalis mearnsi*) 5

Dark-eyed Junco (White-winged) (*Junco hyemalis aikenii*) 2

Dark-eyed Junco (Gray-headed) (*Junco hyemalis caniceps*) 2

Song Sparrow (*Melospiza melodia*) 5

Red-winged Blackbird (*Agelaius phoeniceus*) 8