

# Highlights from the May 18 Bird Walk to Walden Ponds

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Chuck Aid

May 27, 2019



American White Pelican (c) Mick Thompson

Walden Ponds is a collection of flooded gravel pits adjacent to Boulder Creek in eastern Boulder. It is one of Boulder's premier birding sites due to its variety of habitats – open water, gravel bars, sandy beaches, shrubby islands, cattail marshes, dense riparian habitat, and mature cottonwood gallery forest.



Savannah Sparrow (c) Mick Thompson

Prior to arriving at Walden Ponds on Saturday, May 18, we made a brief stop at the trailhead near the Boulder County Open Space offices at Cherryvale and Boulder Roads, which can be a good spot for Bobolinks. Unfortunately, we whiffed on the Bobolinks; however, we did get a number of great looks at singing Savannah Sparrows, noting the striking yellow lores (the area between the bill and eye), the crisp streaking on the flanks and breast, and the noticeably short tail. We also had nice looks at a Great Horned Owl basking in the morning sun.



American Avocet (c) Mick Thompson

Moving on to Walden Ponds the show really got going, and we were kept quite entertained over the ensuing hours. Highlights included Wood Ducks, American Avocets, Spotted Sandpipers, American White Pelicans, and a few Osprey. We had four species of flycatchers two of which can be less common this far west, Eastern Phoebe and Eastern Kingbird. Seeing ten Eastern Kingbird was outstanding! And, the phoebe was of particular interest, because

over the past twenty years they have become increasingly frequent breeders in our area (Larimer, Boulder, and Jefferson Counties). Historically, they have bred in southeastern Colorado, but they are now doing so closer to us here in Evergreen.



Eastern Phoebe (c) Bill Schmoker

Throughout the morning we had good numbers of Western Wood-Pewees, Warbling Vireos, various swallows, House Wrens, American Goldfinches, Bullock's Orioles, Yellow Warblers, and Yellow-rumped Warblers (primarily the Audubon's race with their yellow throats). A couple of key species that we picked up on in lower numbers included a single Gray Catbird and a couple of Common Yellowthroats. The big highlight of the day, however, was the incredible number of Western Tanagers we saw (primarily males). They seemed to be everywhere, and, being among the most spectacular of Colorado's birds, they were a wonderful treat!





Western Tanager (c) Rob Raker

Here's hoping that you can join us on a future bird walk!

Chuck Aid

Walden Ponds, May 18, 2019

51 species (+3 other taxa)

Canada Goose 24

Wood Duck 5

Blue-winged Teal 4

Mallard 12

Green-winged Teal 2

Rock Pigeon (Feral Pigeon) 5

Eurasian Collared-Dove 2

Mourning Dove 30

Broad-tailed Hummingbird 1

American Avocet 2

Killdeer 5

Spotted Sandpiper 3

Double-crested Cormorant 5

American White Pelican 17  
Great Blue Heron 6  
Osprey 3  
Red-tailed Hawk 3  
Belted Kingfisher 1  
Northern Flicker 5  
American Kestrel 2  
Western Wood-Pewee 8  
Eastern Phoebe 1  
Say's Phoebe 3  
Eastern Kingbird 10  
Warbling Vireo 6  
Blue Jay 9  
Black-billed Magpie 2  
American Crow 2  
Common Raven 4  
Tree Swallow 80  
Violet-green Swallow 80  
Barn Swallow 4  
Cliff Swallow 5  
swallow sp. 30  
Black-capped Chickadee 8  
White-breasted Nuthatch 1  
House Wren 24  
American Robin 19  
Gray Catbird 1  
European Starling 1  
House Finch 4  
American Goldfinch 9  
Song Sparrow 4  
Spotted Towhee 2  
Bullock's Oriole 9  
Red-winged Blackbird 80  
Brown-headed Cowbird 26  
Common Grackle 30  
Common Yellowthroat 2  
Yellow Warbler 32  
Yellow-rumped Warbler 6  
Yellow-rumped Warbler (Myrtle) 3  
Yellow-rumped Warbler (Audubon's) 32  
Western Tanager 24

