

Catch the Shorebirds Moving through Colorado

Brad Andres August 3, 2020 :

At the May virtual general meeting, I gave a presentation on shorebird migration biology, ecology and conservation. If you recall, I mentioned that fall migration is the best time to search for shorebirds in Colorado, particularly on the reservoirs along the South Platte River in northeast Colorado. Because of the drought conditions this year, the reservoirs are being drawn down and are providing good shorebird habitat.



Baird's Sandpiper

Over the last month, I have observed 19 species of shorebirds among Jumbo, North Sterling, Prewitt and Jackson reservoirs. Besides the omnipresent Killdeer, Baird's Sandpipers are beginning to show up in substantial numbers along with smattering of other "peeps," including reasonable numbers of Stilt Sandpipers. I have already had a good showing of large shorebirds: Long-billed Curlew, Marbled Godwit and Willet. Last week (the last week in July), I was treated to four adult Black-bellied Plovers, one of my favorites, at Prewitt Reservoir.

Mid-August through mid-September is a great time to search for shorebirds in eastern Colorado. There are relatively few people around during the week (away from the State Park areas), and other birds provide some motivation to wander afield (e.g., Black Tern, Orchard Oriole, Dicksissel). Check out the hotspots mentioned above on eBird to access locations and the most recent checklists.

Good ShoreBirdin'!