

CALENDAR**March/April 2023**

Note: Arrangements for carpooling will be your own responsibility. Accessibility: Walks are no more than 1 1/2 miles, unless otherwise noted. See end of calendar for explanation of accessibility codes located at the end of each event.

MARCH

1 Wednesday 8:00am bird walk
Farmington Pond/Mouth of Farmington Canyon,
Farmington: Meet in the lower parking lot at 750 N 75 W Farmington. Accessibility **R P L B** Leader-Colin/Ben

8 Wednesday 8:00am bird walk
Bountiful Pond: Take the 500 South exit off Legacy Highway, turn west; then follow the frontage road around and back to the north. A pre-bird walk species search will be held. Meet in the parking lot. Accessibility: **R P/U L B** Leader-Colin/Ben

11 Saturday 10:00am-4:00pm Swan Day
Bear River Migratory Bird Refuge Wildlife Education Center: Located at 2155 W. Forest St, Brigham City, UT 84302. Take an auto tour of the refuge to see the swans and enjoy a variety of activities. . More details on pg. 2.

15 Wednesday 8:00am bird walk
Riverdale Trail South: Meet at the trailhead off Riverdale Road at 700 W. Accessibility: **R P L B** Leader-Dan/John

21 Tuesday 7:00pm WAS Meeting
Ogden Nature Center or remote
 Keith Evans, longtime Audubon member, previous WAS president, photographer, and bird expert, will present a program on LBJs (little brown jobs). He will focus on local sparrows, sharing some crossover facts with other hard to identity LBJs.

22 Wednesday 8:00am bird walk
Kaysville Ponds: Meet in the Botanical Center parking lot to walk the trail from there. Located at 920 S 50 W, Kaysville UT 84037 on the frontage road. Accessibility: **R P/U M B** Leader-Ben

25 Saturday 9:00 am field trip
Blue Valley/Golden Spike: Meet At Northwest corner of Parking lot off I-15, 2700 N exit, to carpool or caravan. Bring lunch and water, as trip will last until mid-afternoon. Accesibility: **Minimal walking, stop for restrooms.** Leader-Susan

29 Wednesday 8:00am bird walk
Ogden Bay-North Parking Lot and Refuge: Take 12th St. west to 7500 W. Turn south and go to the parking lot at end of road. Accessibility: **U L** Leader-Dan or John

APRIL

4 Tuesday 7:00pm WAS Board Meeting
 Held remotely.

5 Wednesday 7:30am bird walk
GSL Shoreline Trail boardwalk West Layton: 1002 S 3200 W. Take Gentile St. west and turn left on 3200 W, follow to end of the road, look for the boardwalk trail. Accessibility: **R P/U B L** Leader-Ben

12 Wednesday 7:30am bird walk
Little Mountain Trail: Meet at the trailhead located at 2000 Won 4000 N (west of Smith and Edwards). Accessibility: **U L** Leader-Dan or John

18 Tuesday 7:00pm WAS Meeting
Ogden Nature Center or remote
 Jay Hudson, a long time Audubon member, author, storyteller and trail-builder, will present slides and stories. If you remember Jay's presentation on the Australian outback, you can look forward to a similar program with surprises, humor and anecdotes.

19 Wednesday 7:30am bird walk
Willard Bay: Meet at the Pilot Flying J Travel Center (600 W 750 N, Willard) in the parking lot, south end. Exit I-15 at Willard and go east. Willard Bay is a fee area. Accessibility: **R P/U L B** Leader-Ben

22 Saturday 6:00am field trip
Lek and Loon Trip: Meet at DWR office, 515 E 5300 S (Adams Ave.) in South Ogden at 6:00 am. We will caravan to the lek south of Henefer to observe the grouse from inside our vehicles. Target bids: Greater Sage Grouse, Bald Eagle, Common Loon, American Dipper and Northern Shrike. Accessibility: **Minimal walking, stop for restrooms.** Leader-John

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APRIL

26 Wednesday 7:30am bird walk

Willard Bay: Meet at the Pilot Flying J Travel Center (600 W 750 N, Willard) in the parking lot, south end. Exit I-15 at Willard and go east. Willard Bay is a fee area. Accessibility: **R P/U L B** Leader-Ben

MAY

3 Wednesday 7:30am bird walk

Farmington Bay: Meet on 1325 W (entrance to Farmington Bay Waterfowl Management Area), *not* GSL Nature Center. Accessibility: **R U L** Leader-Colin

Accessibility Codes for walks and trips

- R - Restroom available** **P/U Combination**
- P - Paved trail** **L - Level trail**
- U - Unpaved trail** **M - Moderately level trail**
- B - Benches available**

CONTACTS FOR WALKS AND TRIPS: Dan Johnston 801-645-8633, John Bellmon 801-444-3704, Ben Johnson 801-231-7008

Appreciating an Irruption
The Bohemian Waxwing Invasion
by Ben Johnson



(Photo by the author, Kaysville, January 2023)

As you may already be aware, Bohemian Waxwings (*Bombycilla garrulus*) have come to Utah in [record numbers this winter](#).¹ They have arrived in flocks small and large especially in [Davis](#) and [Weber](#) counties.² Some of our own bird-watchers within Wasatch Audubon have seen large flocks

numbering in the hundreds or more, with one member counting a state-record flock of 1700+ birds! This phenomenon is known as an 'irruption year.' Penn State University delightfully defined an irruption as: "...years when finches and other species that generally winter in the boreal forest of Canada and the far north, move south to the **joy** and **amazement** of bird enthusiasts."³ If you have been lucky enough to see these beautiful birds this winter, you would probably agree that this experience has been both joyful and amazing!

Many of these sightings have been in the Kaysville and Fruit Heights area where the author lives. In all, since mid-December when they arrived by the dozens in my backyard, I've been fortunate enough to record 17 sightings of Bohemian Waxwings (banding code: BOWA), with at least one sighting per week since 12/13! I noticed that BOWAs frequently mixed in with other species when they first arrived in the late fall/early winter. As winter advanced, they seemed to separate more and more and were flocking mostly with only other Bohemians.

As Utahns we're not alone in enjoying this irruption, our neighboring state of Colorado has also been experiencing an influx of Bohemians. The Denver Post even took notice and featured the spectacle with an article in its '[Outdoors](#)' section on 2/2.⁴

BOWAs are related to a regular year-round Utah resident, the Cedar Waxwing [CEDW] (*Bombycilla cedrorum*), but are larger, greyer overall and are distinguishable by their prominent and unique chestnut-colored undertail coverts (visible on the picture above), which the CEDW lacks. Bohemians got their name from their unconventional, wandering and ostensibly carefree lifestyle.⁶ Like their close relative, BOWAs eat a lot of fruit, specifically in the winter months, when berries make up a majority of their diet (in particular, mountain ash and juniper berries are critical). However, unlike Cedars, BOWAs eat many insects in the summer, and even fly out to catch insects in midair like flycatchers would!⁷

BOWAs make cup nests lined with grass and feathers, up to 20 feet off the ground in a tree, often a spruce.⁸ They have 4-6 eggs with both parents feeding the nestlings who leave just 14-18 days after hatching.⁹ The family groups may remain close together through the first migration season.¹⁰

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Join the Intermountain West Spring Migration Shorebird Survey on April 24, 2023

For details, click on the QR code above or go to <https://forms.gle/Cni5MEKudhy2EvETA>

