

High Elevation Clackamas County

September 7, 2024

By Lorin Wilkerson

On a day where several trips were unfortunately cancelled due to poor air quality (09/07/2024), the Timberline Lodge/Timothy Lake trip proceeded as planned. The rising sun hung in the air like a blood orange hemmed in by dense smoky clouds as trip leaders Dan van den Broek, me (Lorin Wilkerson) and de facto trip leader Jeff Dillon made our way to meet a small group of birders interested in fleshing out their Clackamas County lists.

The first stop on the itinerary, Timberline Lodge, yielded the day's only true surprises, and there were several. Before leaving the parking lot, a pair of Cooper's Hawks and a Peregrine Falcon made their way from the Hood River County side of the ridges and over into Clackamas, giving distant but decent views. Unexpectedly large numbers of Dark-eyed Juncos (over 150), Chipping Sparrows (80-100) and Butter-butts (50ish) thronged about the trees near the lodge and the pond, and the group had excellent looks at small numbers of Orange-crowned Warblers, Mountain Chickadees, and Townsend's Warblers.

The big surprises were the Acorn Woodpecker, representing the first eBird record of this species on the slopes of Mt. Hood proper, and the Say's Phoebe that was spotted by all group members after it had the decency to reposition itself once a couple of folks had initially missed it. A nice scope view of a perching Prairie Falcon near the timberline gave us both falcons for the day.

Stops at the Pine Point and Oak Fork locations on Timothy Lake held no rarities, but there were good, solid, late-summer alpine lake birds: small numbers of Barrow's Goldeneye and Common Loons, a dozen Western Grebes and a Horned; there was a lone



Ruddy Duck, and chattering Red Crossbills were ever-present, with some giving nice, close looks as they drank at the shore.

After a stop at Clackamas Lake (note: for those who remember the old boardwalk, it ain't there anymore. If you want to get to the lake shore, prepare to get your feet wet!) the group headed to the North Arm Campground. On the way we stopped as at least 8 Canada Jays cried and mewled, hopping back and forth from the trees to the roadside.

At the North Arm we added Wood Ducks, Coots, Yellowthroats and a few American Wigeon to the day's list before making our ways home. In all, the group recorded 46 species for the day while enjoying some wonderful scenery and camaraderie.

Here is a link to the eBird Trip Report: <https://ebird.org/tripreport/273679>