

JACKSON COUNTY SPOTLIGHT

Blitz Dates

Fri., May 20 to Sun.,
May 22 in Ashland, OR
*In partnership with the
Mountain Bird Festival*

What is a Blitz? Birders from around the state gather in a single county to survey as many birds in as many places as possible in just one weekend. Multiple stationary counts within Oregon2020 Hotspot Squares are encouraged (click [here](#) for our protocol). Participation in Blitzes is free! To register, visit: <http://oregon2020.com/jackson/>



Fast Facts

- All-Time Bird Species Total: **302**
- Breeding Season Bird Species Total: **257**
- Total number of eBird checklists: **19,508**



Photo: Doug Greenberg

Jackson County Species Highlights:

- California Towhee
- Oak Titmouse
- Great Gray Owl
- Northern Mockingbird
- Yellow-breasted Chat

Top Birding Locations in Jackson County:

- Emigrant Lake
- Agate Lake
- Howard Prairie Circuit

Overview of Jackson County



Above: Jackson County is located in the southwestern part of Oregon, about 3 hours south of Eugene.

Jackson County is located in the Southwest corner of Oregon. Its largest city is Medford, followed by Ashland - home of the famous Oregon Shakespeare Festival. Jackson county lies mostly in the rain shadow of the Oregon Coast Range. This valley climate is particularly good for producing fruit, hay, grain, poultry, and beef. Jackson County is also near to natural attractions such as Crater Lake, the Rogue River, and the Klamath and Umpqua National Forests.

The Great Gray Owl: Master of Stealth

A master of stealth and sound detection, the Great Gray Owl is the largest owl in North America and considered the world's largest owl species by length. A very sharp listener, as the Great Grey Owl is able to detect prey over 100 meters away through snow as deep as 17 inches. Other birds beware, as this owl is able to prey on the smallest of finches to medium-size hawks. They are known to nest in abandoned nests of larger raptors, artificial platforms, and the top of large snags. You can normally observe this majestic owl perching and listening for its next meal.

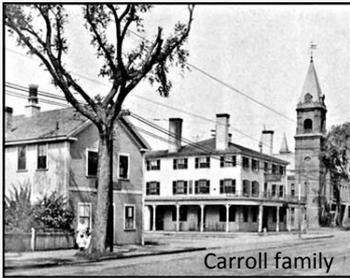


Photo: Jim Richmond

Bull, E.L. and J.R. Duncan. 1993. Great Gray Owl (Strix nebulosa), The Birds of North America Online (A. Poole, Ed.). Ithaca: Cornell Lab of Ornithology.

The Great Gray Owl is one of several exciting potential species during our Jackson County Blitz.

THE HISTORY OF JACKSON COUNTY



Carroll family

This county is the historic home of many native American peoples, including the Modoc, Shasta, Takelma, Latgawa, and Umpqua Indian tribes. The Territorial Legislature created Jackson County on January 12, 1852, and settlers from California

emigrated en-masse following the discovery of gold in the Illinois River and the Rogue River valleys. A 3-year war between Native Americans and miners ended in 1853 with the surrender and relocation of tribes to the Grand Ronde Indian and Siletz reservations. Some beautiful natural areas in the surrounding area include the North Umpqua Hot Springs (a gorgeously cascading series of natural pools), the scenic Natural Bridge Loop trail, and the majestic Rogue River.

LODGING FOR THE JACKSON COUNTY BIRDING BLITZ

Our headquarters and daily meeting location for the Jackson County Blitz will be in Ashland, Oregon.

Many camping, hotel, and bed & breakfast options exist in the Ashland area. For camping, consider Emigrant Lake (6.5mi from Ashland) or the more remote Hyatt Lake (24mi from Ashland).

Ashland is also home to a number of hotel options from the luxury Ashland Springs Hotel to the more economical Stratford Inn,



Holiday Inn, Econolodge, and Super 8.

For a more cozy experience, consider one of the many bed and breakfasts Ashland has to offer. A full listing of B&Bs can be found at <http://stayashland.com>

INTERVIEW WITH LOCAL BIRDER BEN WIELAND

How long have you been birding Oregon? I first birded Oregon in 1998 when I moved to Ashland for grad school at SOU. I left in 2003 for the Upper Midwest, then moved back to the area about a year ago. I visited several times while I was gone, so I guess I've been birding Oregon off and on for about 18 years.

What is your favorite Oregon bird, and favorite Jackson County bird? If I had to choose a favorite bird, I'd say White-headed Woodpecker, for both Oregon and Jackson.

What are some "must bird" locations for visitors? The Siskiyou Crest, which includes Mount Ashland, Lily Glen County Park near Howard Prairie Lake, the Cascade-Siskiyou National Monument, and the patchwork of wetlands, oaks and open chaparral at Denman wildlife area and the nearby table rocks.

What bird species, if any, are you still hoping to find in Jackson County? I am still doggedly pursuing my first Jackson County Pygmy Nuthatch.

Why should birders visit Jackson County? For a landlocked county Jackson has a good diversity of habitats, and nowhere in Oregon is Great Gray Owl easier to find. Birding the oak woodlands and chaparral of the table rocks with the snowy cone of Mount McLoughlin and the Siskiyou Crest as a backdrop is a must for any Oregon birder.



Photo: Helmy Oved

FUN FACT:

DID YOU KNOW...

Jackson County is home to the well-known Oregon Vortex, a roadside attraction located in Gold Hill. A museum of mind-bending illusions, which claims mysterious phenomena and strange magnetic fields occur within!

Don't forget to register for the **Jackson County Birding Blitz**, May 20-22! Free registration and more information available here: <http://oregon2020.com/jackson/>