

UMATILLA COUNTY SPOTLIGHT

Blitz Dates

Friday, June 17 to
Sunday, June 19 in
Pendleton, OR

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/umatilla/>



Fast Facts

- All-Time Bird Species Total: **278**
- Breeding Season Bird Species Total: **221**
- Total number of eBird checklists: **2,013**



Photo: A. Reago & C. McClarren

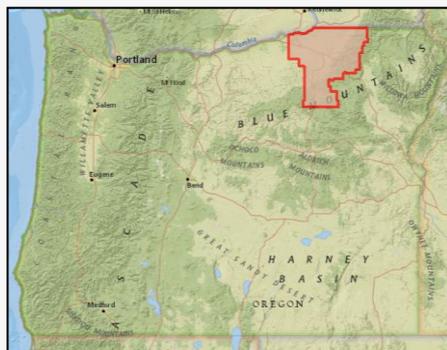
Umatilla County Species Highlights:

- Eastern Kingbird
- Yellow-headed Blackbird
- Black-chinned Hummingbird
- Gray Partridge

Top Birding Locations in Umatilla County:

- Cold Springs NWR
- McNary Dam
- McKay Creek NWR

Overview of Umatilla County



Above: Umatilla County is located in the northwest corner of the state, centered on its largest city, Pendleton.

Umatilla County is located along the Columbia River and Highway 84, a few hours' drive East of Portland. From the river to the Blue Mountains in the east, Umatilla is a rich and diverse county. A large portion of the land is used for agriculture, and the rest is mainly composed of Sagebrush and Bitterbrush steppe and shrub land, Ponderosa Pine and mixed conifer forest. Umatilla's largest city, Pendleton, is famous for the "Pendleton Round-up" - an annual rodeo.

Meet the Black-chinned Hummingbird

The Black-chinned hummingbird is a wide-ranging hummingbird. It does not have a limited distribution, nor is it found exclusively in remote locations. These birds are highly adaptable; they can be seen in urban areas and are attracted to feeders. They journey across the deserts of Arizona to mountains of the Sierra Nevadas. On average, females are larger than males. Males are extremely territorial and stand guard on tall perches. When a male hummingbird trespasses on another territory, both males chase each other aggressively. These birds have a resting heart rate of 480 beats per minute!

Baltosser, W.H. and S.M. Russell. 2000. Black-chinned Hummingbird (Archilochus alexandri), The Birds of North America Online (A. Poole, Ed.). Ithaca: Cornell Lab of Ornithology



Photo: MDF

Keep an eye out for Black-chinned Hummingbirds across the county on our Umatilla Birding Blitz.

THE HISTORY OF UMATILLA COUNTY



Umatilla County was first settled by Europeans after the gold rush of 1862, which brought miners and stock raisers to the mountains and grasslands. The arrival of a railroad in 1881

opened the region to the development of wheat farming. Throughout the county and especially in the Hermiston area, where watermelons and other lush crops are grown, the development of irrigation from the Columbia river has been key to economic growth. "Umatilla" is a Native American word that means "rippling water", likely describing the Umatilla river.

LODGING FOR THE UMATILLA COUNTY BIRDING BLITZ

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

Pendleton offers a variety of economy and luxury hotels for the visitor. The Wildhorse Resort and Casino offers additional resort-style amenities, including golfing. Camping options include Hat Rock on the Columbia river, and



Fort Henrietta Park south of Hermiston. The county also offers remote, cozy lodges and B&Bs. For more lodging options in the Pendleton area, visit: <http://www.travelpendleton.com/stay>

An Interview with Local eBirder Jenny Barnett

How long have you been birding in Oregon? About 15 years

What is your favorite Oregon bird, and your favorite Umatilla county bird? Oregon bird is the Sage-grouse. Umatilla County - Say's pheobe

What are your favorite birding spots in Umatilla county? I like Battle Mountain State Park and the pass beyond. I also like the Umatilla River are, around Iskuulpte Creek. But, I don't venture out birding much... I am more of a opportunistic birder and half my e-bird checklists I generate through work.

What bird species, if any, are you still hoping to find in Umatilla county? Since I bird opportunistically, I don't really have one that "got away".

Why should Oregon birders visit Umatilla county? Diversity. Umatilla County has a wide variety of habitats and bird species. You can bird along the Columbia River and nearby state and federal wildlife refuges, focusing on wetlands. You can drive past CRP lands looking for grasshopper sparrows and others grassland birds. You can bird in riparian areas, both low and high elevation, and you can bird in conifer forests.



FUN FACTS:

DID YOU KNOW...

Pendleton is full of art and history! The Pendleton Farmers' Market operates on Friday evenings through October. Pendleton Underground Tours features a tour through the underground tunnels and brothels built in the early 1900's.

Don't forget to register for the **Umatilla County Birding Blitz**, June 17-19! Free registration and more information available here: <http://oregon2020.com/umatilla/>