

## NEW PLYMOUTH AREA

Author: Dan Stephens

Site SW-1 — Map SW-1

**Highlights:** Ross's Goose, Wood Duck, Red-breasted Merganser

**Major Habitats:** Wetland, Deciduous Forest

**Location:** Payette Co., New Plymouth

**Spring:** \*\*\* **Summer:** \*\* **Fall:** \*\* **Winter:** \*

A quick stop off I-84 can add several unusual species to a trip list, especially if you're visiting during February to May. The two most productive sites are the sewage ponds, where over 21 waterfowl species have been recorded, and Bird Island.

### DIRECTIONS:

At I-84 Exit 9 zero your mileage and follow US 30 north 4.7 miles into New Plymouth. At mile 4.8 turn right (east) for one block, then turn left (north) on Holly Avenue. At mile 5.5 turn right (east) on NW 1st Avenue. At mile 6.1 you'll see the two sewage ponds on your left (north). All land here is private.

### BIRDING:

You'll have to scope the sewage ponds and surrounding fields from the road, since both are currently posted "No Trespassing." On the ponds look for Tundra Swans in mid-March and for Snow, Ross's, and Canada Geese in

late March to early April. Red-breasted Mergansers are likely in March, while Barrow's Goldeneyes and Common and Hooded Mergansers can be expected throughout spring. Watch for shorebirds, including American Avocets, Marbled Godwits, and Spotted Sandpipers. Fields west of the sewage ponds attract Sandhill Cranes in March and early April and a variety of raptors year round, including Northern Harriers, Red-tailed, Swainson's, and Rough-legged Hawks, and Short-eared Owls.

To investigate Bird Island, continue east on NW 1st Avenue (a.k.a. Black Bridge Road) to mile 7.1, then park in the lot on the right (southeast), just before the bridge. Walk across the road and bird the extensive riparian area downstream from the bridge. *Note that this area is private, but the public is currently allowed to roam.* Birding is best during May and June. Expect common riparian birds, such as Downy Woodpeckers, Western Wood-Pewees, Yellow Warblers, Spotted Towhees, and American Goldfinches. In migration more unusual species, such as Nashville, Townsend's, and Wilson's Warblers, can be expected. This section of the Payette River also supports one of Idaho's largest Wood Duck populations.

### OTHER:

New Plymouth offers food, fuel, and lodging. Camping is available in Payette and Caldwell. The closest full-service communities are Caldwell, Idaho, and Ontario, Oregon.

## FORT BOISE WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT AREA

Author: John F. Gatchet

Site SW-2 — Map SW-2

**Highlights:** Greater White-fronted and Ross's Geese

**Major Habitats:** Wetland, Deciduous Forest, Farmland

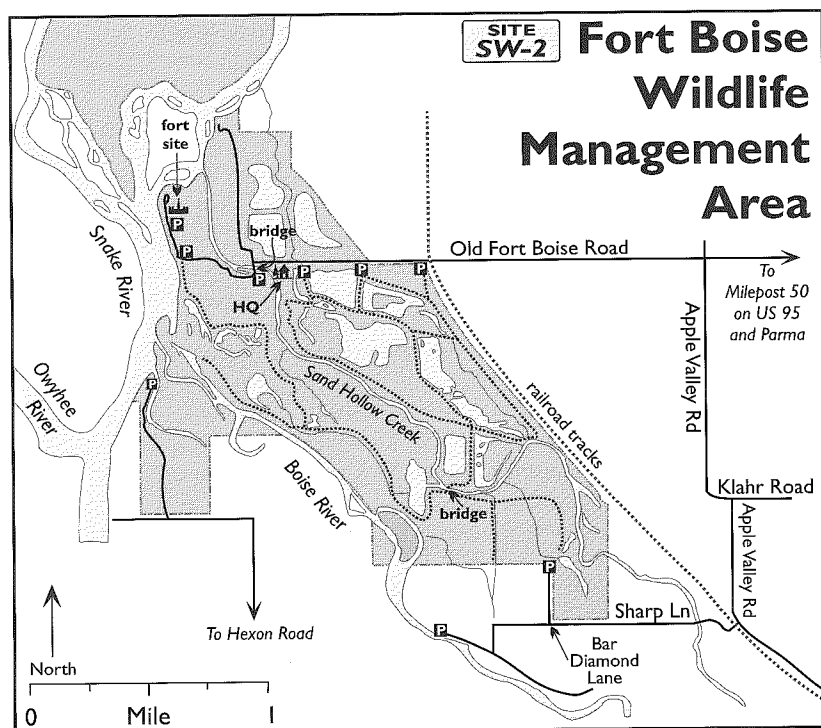
**Location:** Canyon Co., 4 miles northwest of Parma

**Spring:** \*\*\*\*\* **Summer:** \*\*\* **Fall:** \*\*\*\*\* **Winter:** \*\*\*

Fort Boise WMA covers the confluence of the Snake, Boise, and Owyhee Rivers. The riparian forest is very birdy, and numerous ponds attract hordes of waterfowl and shorebirds. Neighboring farmfields and grasslands add to habitat diversity. This is Idaho's most dependable location for Greater White-fronted Geese. Most birding is done on foot along the maze of trails and gated roads. Be aware that much of the WMA is closed from February to July, and that hunting pressure is intense from October through January.

### DIRECTIONS:

From Parma follow US 95 north 3.5 miles. At milepost 50, turn left (west) onto paved Old Fort Boise Road and zero your mileage. As you drive toward



the WMA, watch the privately-owned farm fields for migrating Greater White-fronted, Snow, and Ross's Geese, especially from March 15 to April 15.

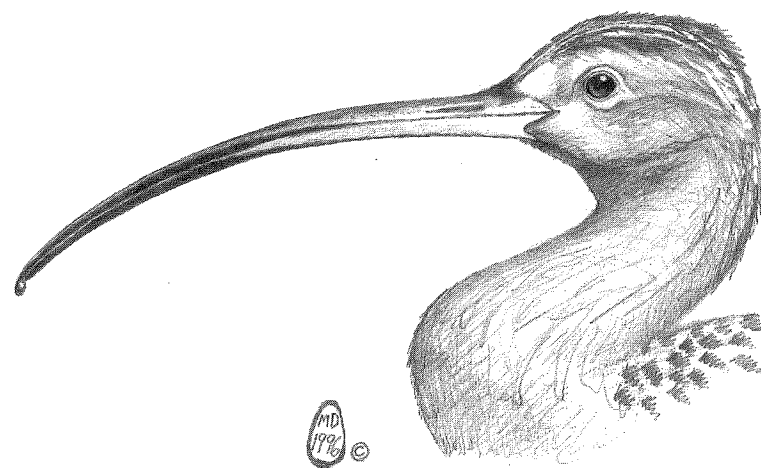
#### BIRDING:

You'll enter the WMA after crossing the railroad tracks at about mile 2.6. There are three small parking lots on the left (south) between miles 2.6 and 2.8. From August 1 to January 31, use the stiles at these lots to cross the fence to the south, then wander the 20 miles of roads which snake back-and-forth among brush, wetlands, grasslands, and trees. During the rest of the year you'll be limited to scanning from Old Fort Boise Road. Great and Snowy Egrets, Green Herons (very rare), Black-crowned Night-Herons, Wood Ducks, Cinnamon and Blue-winged Teals, Sharp-shinned and Cooper's Hawks, Northern Goshawks, Merlins, Peregrine Falcons, Virginia Rails, and Soras should all be looked for. Red-tailed and Swainson's Hawks are common nesters. Ponds on the north side of the road are closed to entry year round, but a scope can often find shorebirds and Caspian, Common, Forster's, and Black Terns. (You may have to stand on your car's bumper to see them well, though.) Black-bellied Plovers, American Golden-Plovers, Black-necked Stilts, American Avocets, Baird's, Pectoral, and Solitary Sandpipers, Marbled Godwits, Long-billed Curlews, and Dunlins have all been seen here.

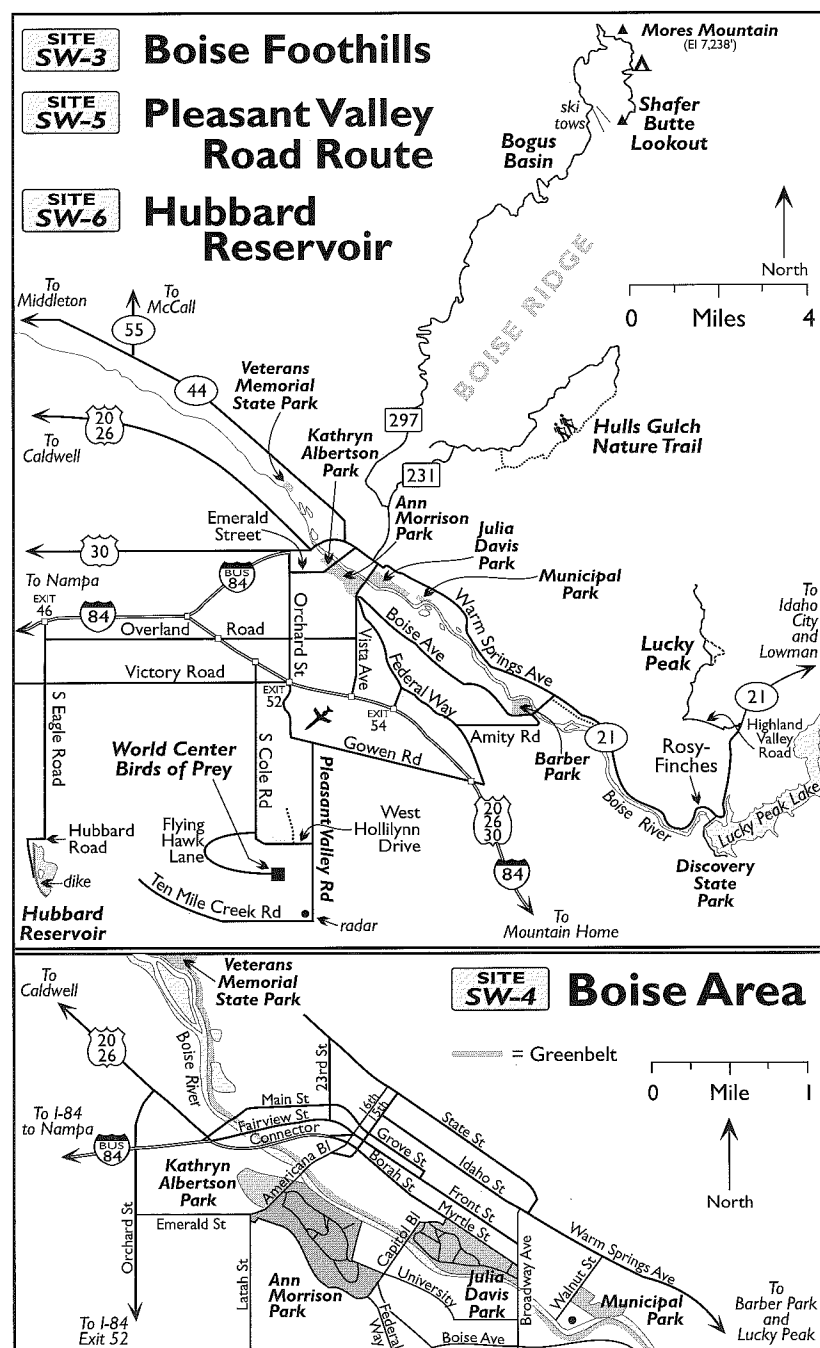
Continuing west on Old Fort Boise Road, drive past headquarters (mile 2.9) and then follow the left road-fork over the bridge, and drive or walk to the Snake River in another 0.5 mile or so. This area is open to foot traffic year round. Dense riparian cover along the river attracts wintering Northern Shrikes and hordes of White-crowned Sparrows, as well as a few White-throated, Harris's, and Swamp (rare) Sparrows. Other winter birds include Mountain Chickadees, Varied Thrushes, Orange-crowned Warblers, and Fox and Golden-crowned (rare) Sparrows. This is a great spot for spring and fall warblers, including Nashville, Black-throated Gray, Townsend's, MacGillivray's, and Wilson's. In the thickest cover, look for Western Screech-Owls, Barn, Long-eared, and Northern Saw-whet Owls, Yellow-breasted Chats, Hermit Thrushes, and Black-headed Grosbeaks. Vagrants have included a Yellow-billed Cuckoo and several Lesser Goldfinches.

#### OTHER:

Parma offers food, fuel, and accommodations. The WMA is closed at night. The closest developed campgrounds are in Caldwell, Idaho, and in Succor Creek State Recreation Area (southwest of Homedale, Oregon). All services are available in Caldwell/Nampa. For a map and more information, contact the WMA (208/722-5888).



Long-billed Curlew  
Mike Denny



## BOISE FOOTHILLS

Author: Dave Trochlell

Site SW-3 — Map SW-3/SW-4/SW-5/SW-6

**Highlights:** Raptors, Sparrows

**Major Habitats:** Shrub-steppe, Deciduous Forest, Farmland

**Location:** Ada Co., Boise

**Spring:** \*\* **Summer:** \*\* **Fall:** \*\* **Winter:** \*\*

The Boise Foothills cover 65 square miles of rolling uplands. As defined here, they are bounded by Boise Valley and Boise Ridge and run from ID 55 to ID 21. More than 175 bird species have been recorded, including 26 raptors and 14 sparrows! This species list will undoubtedly change, however, since a great range fire consumed huge chunks of shrub-steppe habitat in the fall of 1996.

### DIRECTIONS:

Because of the Foothill's large size, two routes and a site are recommended to sample the habitat variety. There are different starting points for each. You'll need a Boise city map, available at most convenience stores in Boise, or from "King of the Road Map Service" (800/223-8852). A DeLorme Atlas will also be useful.

Most land along this route is public (state, BLM, FS). The majority of private land is unposted and is generally open to public use. You should have no problem if you respect posted signs.

### BIRDING:

#### BOGUS BASIN ROUTE

Bogus Basin Road climbs from the Boise Valley to Bogus Basin Ski Resort. Along the way this 14-mile paved route passes through a wide variety of habitats, providing the opportunity to inventory several "life zones" in the course of a single day.

The tour begins at the intersection of Hill and Bogus Basin Roads. Zero your mileage here, then head north on Bogus Basin Road (a.k.a. FR 297).

At mile 2.7 stop and park in the pull-out area on the left (west) across from an old road. Walk the old road northeast toward Boise Ridge. In summer species here include Northern Harrier, Red-tailed Hawk, Golden Eagle, Gray Partridge, Chukar, Blue Grouse, Horned Lark, Common Raven, Sage Thrasher, Brewer's, Vesper, and Lark Sparrows, and Western Meadowlark. In winter watch for Sharp-shinned Hawk, Rough-legged Hawk, Merlin, Horned Lark, White-crowned Sparrow, Dark-eyed Junco, and Snow Bunting (rare).

Bogus Basin Road crosses Dry Creek at mile 4.8. Park in the small pull-out on the right (north) and hike uphill along the canyon for riparian birds. (A trail at mile 5.0 follows the creek uphill, making for easier walking.) Spring and summer species include California Quail, Great Horned Owl, Black-chinned and Calliope Hummingbirds, Downy Woodpecker, Western Wood-Pewee, House Wren, Black-capped Chickadee, Warbling Vireo, Red-eyed Vireo (uncommon), Orange-crowned and Yellow Warblers, Yellow-breasted Chat, and Song Sparrow. Broad-tailed Hummingbird, Bushtit, and Blue-gray Gnatcatcher are rare migrants. Winter species might include Sharp-shinned and Cooper's Hawks, Northern Goshawk, Merlin, Great Horned Owl, Brown Creeper, Winter Wren, Ruby-crowned Kinglet, Northern Shrike, and White-crowned Sparrow. Northern Pygmy-Owl, Long-eared and Northern Saw-whet Owls, and Bohemian Waxwings are rare but possible. You can also access Dry Creek at mile 6.9. Park along the tree-belt and hike the old gulch trail down to the creek bottom.

Bogus Basin Road enters mountain brush habitat at mile 10.6. Stop anywhere where you can safely park. This ecotone hosts birds of both shrub-steppe and conifer forest habitats. Likely summer species include Red-tailed Hawk, Golden Eagle, American Kestrel, Blue Grouse, Wild Turkey, Common Poorwill, Calliope Hummingbird, Lewis's and Hairy Woodpeckers, Red-breasted Nuthatch, Mountain Bluebird, Chipping Sparrow, Dark-eyed Junco, Cassin's Finch, and Pine Siskin. Elk and Mule Deer are likely to be seen, as well.

At mile 12 you transition into the conifer forest zone. Typical birds here include Sharp-shinned and Cooper's Hawks, Northern Goshawks, Blue Grouse, Wild Turkeys, Flammulated Owls, Northern Pygmy-Owls, Hairy Woodpeckers, White-headed Woodpeckers (uncommon to rare), Dusky Flycatchers, Steller's Jays, Clark's Nutcrackers, Mountain Chickadees, Red-breasted Nuthatches, Townsend's Solitaires, Golden-crowned and Ruby-crowned Kinglets, Swainson's and Hermit Thrushes, Varied Thrushes (uncommon migrant), Cassin's Vireos, Nashville and Yellow-rumped Warblers, Western Tanagers, Chipping Sparrows, Dark-eyed Juncos, Pine Grosbeaks, Cassin's Finches, Red Crossbills, and Pine Siskins. In riparian zones within the conifer forest, look for Northern Saw-whet Owls, Calliope and Rufous Hummingbirds, Downy Woodpeckers, Olive-sided Flycatchers (uncommon), Winter Wrens, Warbling Vireos, Orange-crowned and Wilson's Warblers, Black-headed Grosbeaks, and Fox Sparrows.

At mile 14.2 you pass the junction with Boise Ridge Road (stay left); you will reach the end of pavement at Bogus Basin Ski Resort at mile 16.3. At mile 19.8 go right (east) to Shafer Butte Campground, which is open July to September. Look for Clark's Nutcrackers, White-crowned Sparrows, and migrating accipiters.

#### HULLS GULCH ROUTE

The Hulls Gulch tour begins at the intersection of West Fort and 8th Streets in Boise. Zero your mileage here, then go north on 8th Street (a.k.a.

Hulls Gulch Road, a.k.a. Mile High Road, a.k.a. Sunset Peak Road)...watch out for speed bumps!

You enter the Boise Front Recreation Area at mile 1.1. At mile 1.3 park on the left (west) and walk the graveled road southwest 0.25 mile to a small pond. Bird the maze of trails that head up the gulch. The summer bird list is similar to that for the Bogus Basin riparian area, but it can also include wetland species such as Great Blue Heron, Wood Duck, Mallard, Cinnamon Teal, Virginia Rail (uncommon), Common Snipe, Great Horned Owl, Marsh Wren, and Common Yellowthroat.

In fall and winter this site attracts lots of sparrows because of its wet, brushy habitat. Look for Lincoln's, White-throated, Golden-crowned, and Harris's Sparrows among the more common species. Swamp Sparrow may also be possible. Great Horned Owls have nested across the road from the wetland in the small grove of trees. Barred Owls (rare) have been found in winter. This is a very popular recreation area, so it is best birded early in the day or on weekdays.

To monitor the impact of wildfire on shrub-steppe, riparian, and mountain brush habitats, drive up Hulls Gulch Road (pavement ends at mile 1.5) to the BLM's Hulls Gulch Interpretive Trail parking lot and trailhead at mile 4.6. Before the 1996 range fire, this 3-mile (one-way) interpretive trail was one of the best birding areas in the Boise Foothills, full of nesting Plumbeous Vireos, Yellow-breasted Chats, and Lazuli Buntings, as well as hosting Great Basin Gopher Snakes, racers, Western Toads, and Western Fence Lizards.

#### LUCKY PEAK

A hawk-watch was recently established on top of Lucky Peak. Approximately 3,000 raptors fly by each fall, August–October. Interestingly, these



Harris's Sparrow  
Mike Denny

flights have included a few Broad-winged Hawks during the last two weeks of September. Flammulated Owls, Northern Pygmy-Owls, and Northern Saw-whet Owls have been trapped here, as well.

To get to Lucky Peak from Boise, go east from the intersection of Broadway and Warm Springs Avenue for 13.1 miles on Warm Springs Avenue (Warm Springs Avenue becomes ID 21) to Highland Valley Road (signed). Turn left (west) and head up Highland Valley Road. After 2 miles turn right at the intersection. Continue climbing toward Boise Ridge on this main road. (You will pass other, unsigned intersections.) You can see Lucky Peak's radio towers and forested ridgeline from quite a distance. *Do not attempt this steep, rutted dirt/rock road without a high-clearance 4-wheel-drive vehicle.*

#### OTHER:

Boise is a full-service community. Maps and information can be obtained from the FS (208/367-9083) or BLM (208/384-3300) in Boise. For more information on Lucky Peak, contact the IDFG Southwest Volunteer Coordinator (208/327-7099).

## BOISE AREA

Author: Dave Trochlell

### Site SW-4 — Map SW-3/SW-4/SW-5/SW-6

**Highlights:** Eurasian Wigeon, Western Screech-Owl, Black Rosy-Finch

**Major Habitats:** Deciduous Forest, Wetland

**Location:** Ada Co., Boise

**Spring:** \*\*    **Summer:** \*\*    **Fall:** \*\*    **Winter:** \*\*\*

Boise, Idaho's capital and largest city, boasts a remarkable 19-mile public parkway known as the Greenbelt. Running along the Boise River, the Greenbelt is a mostly-paved bicycle/pedestrian path connecting various parks and natural areas. Several common birds can be found in the parks, including Great Blue Herons, Canada Geese, Wood Ducks, Mallards, Common Mergansers, Western Screech-Owls, American Kestrels, Downy Woodpeckers, Northern Flickers, Black-capped Chickadees, and Song Sparrows. Some of the best birding, however, is in the riparian wetlands and vegetation along the pathway itself. Two of the "birdiest" sections are highlighted below.

#### DIRECTIONS:

The starting point for both sites is I-84. A city map can be very useful and is sold in most convenience stores. A Boise Park and Greenbelt map can be picked-up at the Boise Parks and Recreation administration office (208/384-4240), at 1104 Royal Boulevard (the east end of Ann Morrison Park).

#### BIRDING:

### KATHRYN ALBERTSON and ANN MORRISON PARKS

Boise's most popular parks are neighboring Kathryn Albertson and Ann Morrison. To find this area from I-84, take Exit 52, zero your mileage, and head north on Orchard Street. At mile 2.5 turn right (east) onto Emerald Street and continue straight at mile 3.2 as Emerald Street becomes Americana Boulevard. At mile 3.5 turn left (west) into Kathryn Albertson Park or right (east) into Ann Morrison Park, just before crossing the Boise River bridge.

Ann Morrison Park is 153 acres of exotic trees, lawns, ballfields, tennis courts, picnic areas, and parking lots, but it still produces good birding. In spring or fall check the shrubby hillside along the park's entire south end. It can be good for flycatchers, thrushes, vireos, warblers, towhees, and sparrows.

In winter check the bird flocks near the large pond at the park's west entrance on Americana Boulevard. This is a popular bird-feeding location, so several dozen geese, ducks, and gulls are usually present. Search the American Wigeon flocks carefully; this is Idaho's most reliable spot for Eurasian Wigeons. Keep an eye out for Herring Gulls among abundant Ring-billed and California Gulls. Possible rarities include Thayer's, Glaucous, and Glaucous-winged Gulls.

In Kathryn Albertson Park, walk the entire perimeter path through different man-made wildlife habitats. Scan the park's west-side trees and shrubs for migrant flycatchers, vireos, and warblers. Look and listen for an occasional Yellow-headed Blackbird among the nesting Red-wings during spring. In winter watch for Sharp-shinned Hawks, American Kestrels, Merlins, Golden-crowned and Ruby-crowned Kinglets, Cedar and Bohemian Waxwings, and Yellow-rumped Warblers. The pond attracts wintering Gadwalls, Hooded Mergansers, and Virginia Rails and has even hosted a rare Green Heron.

From Kathryn Albertson Park, you can walk the Greenbelt about 1.5 miles downstream to Veterans Memorial State Park. The Greenbelt section between the parks passes by cottonwoods, ponds, and urban areas. Watch and listen for migrating flycatchers, vireos, warblers, and tanagers in the cottonwoods. Check the ponds on the east side of Veterans Memorial State Park for migrating loons, grebes, geese, ducks, gulls, and terns.

### BARBER PARK

Barber Park is the farthest east of the Greenbelt parks. It is open to vehicular traffic from 8 am to sunset. Foot traffic is welcome anytime.

To reach Barber Park from I-84, take Exit 54, zero your mileage, and follow Broadway Avenue north toward Boise State University. At mile 0.4 exit right (southeast) on Federal Way. At mile 2.1 turn left (east) on Amity Road (a.k.a. ID 21). At mile 4 keep left as Amity runs into Healey Road, curves, crosses

a canal, and goes downhill to become Eckert Road. Just before crossing the Boise River at mile 4.4, turn left (west) into Barber Park.

Barber Park is particularly good for Western Screech-Owls. To try for these birds, park outside the park at dusk and walk the park's drive to the park's western border, where the Greenbelt connects. Western Screech-Owls may be found anywhere in this area.

For additional daylight birding follow the Greenbelt downstream 1.5 miles to River Run Subdivision (or even farther, if you prefer). Between Barber Park and River Run, the Greenbelt harbors old-growth cottonwoods, native riparian shrubs, ponds, and a marsh. Nesters include Wood Ducks, Western Screech-Owls, Lewis's Woodpeckers, Western Wood-Pewees, and Black-headed Grosbeaks. These species are supplemented in season with migrant Ospreys, Dusky Flycatchers, Swainson's and Hermit Thrushes, Plumbeous Vireos, Nashville, MacGillivray's, and Wilson's Warblers, Western Tanagers, and Lazuli Buntings. In spring look for Cinnamon Teal and Red-breasted Mergansers. Rare late-summer or early-fall visitors have included Green Herons, Caspian Terns, and Blue-gray Gnatcatchers. Late fall and winter is the best time to walk this section for waterfowl and raptors, including Wood Ducks and Bald Eagles. American Dippers are rare but regular during these seasons. Migrant or winter sparrow flocks occasionally yield Lincoln's Sparrows and may even include a few White-throated or Harris's Sparrows. In recent winters, species such as Green Heron, Barn Owl, Northern Saw-whet Owl, Blue Jay, Varied Thrush, and Northern Mockingbird have also been found here.

To bird the Greenbelt upstream of Barber Park, return to the east end of Barber Park and drive north on Eckert Road for 0.6 mile. Park here to access the paved bike-trail, and walk 3.5 miles upstream to Lucky Peak Park (Discovery Unit). The first 1.2-mile section of the trail parallels the highway before dropping down to riverside cottonwoods, where Wood Ducks and Yellow-breasted Chats can be found. (NOTE: There are other access points along this section of Greenbelt, but they are limited because most neighboring land is private and posted.) While on the Greenbelt, be sure to look and listen for locally rare Red-eyed Vireos in cottonwoods and for Lesser Goldfinches in shrubs. In winter this area is good for Bald Eagles, Western Screech-Owls, and (possibly) Northern Pygmy-Owls. Townsend's Solitaires and Northern Shrikes are occasionally present. One of the great winter treats is to walk or drive (see map) to Lucky Peak Park (Discovery Unit) and watch Gray-crowned and Black Rosy-Finches come to roost in Cliff Swallow nests, right before dusk. The swallow nests are on the basalt cliff, across the road (ID 21) from the park.

#### OTHER:

Boise is a full-service community. Accommodations, food, and fuel are abundant. Campgrounds, however, are limited. For more information con-

tact the Boise Chamber of Commerce (208/344-5515) or the Boise Convention and Visitors Bureau (208/344-7777).

A unique natural-history experience can be had at the IDFG's Morrison Knudson Nature Center. The "MK" Nature Center, located at the west end of Municipal Park, offers a close-up look at a variety of simulated Idaho wildlife habitats, including an outdoor stroll along a mountain stream complete with underwater-viewing windows! Western Screech-Owls can often be heard calling near the center. The nature trail is free and is open sunrise to sunset. The center is open Tuesday through Sunday, but the hours change seasonally. There is an admission fee. Call the center (208/368-6060) for more information.

## PLEASANT VALLEY ROAD ROUTE

Author: Dave Trochlell

Site SW-5 — Map SW-3/SW-4/SW-5/SW-6

**Highlights:** Long-billed Curlew, Chukar, Gray Partridge

**Major Habitats:** Shrub-steppe, Farmland

**Location:** Ada Co., Boise

**Spring:** \*\* **Summer:** \*\* **Fall:** \*\*\* **Winter:** \*\*

*Located just a few miles south of the Boise Airport, this 12-mile route accesses the single most dependable spot for Chukars and Gray Partridge in Idaho.*

#### DIRECTIONS:

Zero your mileage at I-84 Exit 52, then head south on Orchard Street, following it as it curves around the airport and merges with Gowen Road. Most land here is private.

#### BIRDING:

Scope the large waste-water pond on your right (west) at mile 1.3 for grebes, ducks, and swallows. At mile 2 turn right (south) on Pleasant Valley Road and start looking for soaring Northern Harriers, Swainson's, Red-tailed, and Rough-legged Hawks, and American Kestrels. At mile 4.3 turn right (west) on West Hollilynn (a.k.a. Hollylynn) Drive. At mile 4.8 a dirt trail takes off to the right (northwest). Walk here to find Burrowing and Short-eared Owls amid sagebrush and annual grasses; nesting Long-billed Curlews are very conspicuous here in spring and summer.

Continue west on West Hollilynn Drive and enter a small subdivision. Drive slowly, scanning the large house lots, plantings, and grass-covered hillside. This subdivision is the easiest and most consistent spot in Idaho for Gray Partridge and Chukars. The birds often feed in the yards like chickens! At mile 6.4 West Hollilynn ends at South Cole Road near the intersection

with Flying Hawk Lane, which is the entrance road to the Peregrine Fund/World Center for Birds of Prey.

The center (fee) is full of information on birds of the area and on raptors of the world. The center's facilities include live raptors, multi-media presentations, interactive displays and exhibits, a gift shop, and more. The center boasts a history of raptor breeding projects including years of Peregrine Falcon experience as well as recent Harpy Eagle and California Condor work. The center grounds are also good for Chukar and Gray Partridge; these species often water here. After you finish your visit to the center, turn around and backtrack east on West Hollilynn Drive. At the intersection with Pleasant Valley Road, re-zero your mileage and turn right (south) on Pleasant Valley Road.

At mile 2.4 turn right (west) on a graveled road that leads to a globe-shaped National Weather Service radar tower. At the BLM hayshed/corral, park and walk around to search for Gray Partridge and Chukars. You may also see Barn Owls in the open-sided hayshed; the birds have even nested here.

Return to Pleasant Valley Road and continue south. In 0.2 mile turn right (west) on Ten Mile Creek Road. Stop often along this road to scan for Northern Harriers, Swainson's and Red-tailed Hawks, American Kestrels, and Ring-necked Pheasants. Ferruginous Hawks are possible. If you drive this road at dawn or dusk, watch for hunting Barn, Great Horned, Long-eared, and Short-eared Owls.

#### OTHER:

For maps and more information, contact the BLM (208/384-3300) in Boise. Boise is a full-service community. See also Blacks Creek Reservoir Route (p. 173) and Snake River Birds of Prey Area (p. 178). The World Center Birds of Prey (208/362-8687) is open Tuesday-Sunday, 9 am to 5 pm.

## HUBBARD RESERVOIR

Author: John F. Gatchet

Site **SW-6** — Map **SW-3/SW-4/SW-5/SW-6**

**Highlights:** Shorebirds, Burrowing Owl

**Major Habitat:** Wetland

**Location:** Ada Co., 7 miles south of Meridian

**Spring:** \*\*\* **Summer:** \*\*\*\* **Fall:** \*\*\* **Winter:** \*\*

*This small irrigation reservoir offers waterbirds an isolated sanctuary amid miles of agricultural fields. Birding is particularly productive when mudflats attract hundreds of shorebirds. This spot is also good for Burrowing Owl, which can be found on 9 out of 10 visits from late spring through summer.*

#### DIRECTIONS:

From I-84 Exit 46 (between Nampa and Boise), head south on S. Eagle Road for about 5 miles, then turn right (west) on Hubbard Road and follow it southwest for 0.9 mile. Park at the narrow dirt pull-out on the left (east), just before the wooden fence. Walk up the steep slope on the narrow footpath and then hike south to the wetland along the top of the dike. The public is currently allowed to use this private reservoir, but do not trespass on the neighboring agricultural land (posted).

#### BIRDING:

Watch for Burrowing Owls along the dike top. One or two families usually nest in the soft dirt along the dike's fill-slope.

From July to October, regular shorebird species include Semipalmated Plover, Black-necked Stilt, American Avocet, Greater and Lesser Yellowlegs, Solitary Sandpiper, Long-billed Curlew, Semipalmated, Western, Least, Baird's, and Pectoral Sandpipers, Dunlin, Stilt Sandpiper, Long-billed and Short-billed (rare) Dowitchers, Common Snipe, and Wilson's and Red-necked Phalaropes. In late summer you may also find Great and Snowy Egrets, White-faced Ibis, Black-crowned Night-Heron, and Forster's and Black Terns. During migration Franklin's, Bonaparte's, and Herring Gulls can be found among the more-common Ring-billed and California Gulls. If you're lucky, you may also see the small group of feral Ruddy Shelducks that have used the reservoir during recent falls, adding a splash of color among the more-expected Green-winged, Cinnamon, and Blue-winged Teals.

#### OTHER:

Food, fuel, and lodging are available in Meridian. Boise is the closest full-service community.