

access to this area. One of the best for condition and birds is Coleman Canyon. Travel east from Ellensburg on Vantage Hwy (University Way). Turn north onto No. 81 Rd, east on Brick Mill Rd, north on Cooke Canyon Rd, and west on Coleman Creek Rd. Return south and go east on Gage Rd to explore other areas including the Colockum Wildlife Area. **DO NOT ATTEMPT COLOCKUM PASS WITHOUT 4WD.** ⚙️ ⚡ ⚙️ DMC

27. QUILOMENE/WHISKEY DICK WILDLIFE AREA. The largest accessible shrub-steppe in the county. **Birds:** Shrub-steppe obligates including raptors, sparrows, bluebirds, shrike, and Sage Thrasher. **Directions:** From University Way (Vantage Hwy) in Ellensburg head east 18 miles. Just past a windfarm energy entrance on right, turn left (north) into a signed, informal parking area; walking the dirt road produces the most sightings. ⚙️ ⚡ ⚙️ DC IBA

28. VANTAGE AREA (NORTH OF I-90). River, cliffs, large deciduous trees, and shrub-steppe. **Birds:** wintering ducks, raptors, migrating warblers, phoebe, sparrows. **Directions:** Exit I-90 exit 136, north toward Vantage. This area is best during the winter when ducks are on the Columbia River but can also be productive during migration. Highlights include the County Boat Ramp which offers close up viewing of waterfowl without having to get out of your car, and Ginkgo State Park Visitor Center which offers a view of the Columbia River from above (a scope is advisable). Return to Vantage Hwy, turn right (west) and again right into the Rocky Coulee Recreation Area (picnic site), with river views and a short trail that goes along the bank to the north. Continuing west on Vantage Hwy leads to site #27. ❖ DR

29. COLUMBIA RIVER (SOUTH OF I-90). River, shrub-steppe, and cliffs. **Birds:** Bald & Golden Eagles, sparrows, ducks, pelicans, egrets, herons, & loons. **Directions:** I-90 exit 136, south on Huntzinger Rd. There is very little parking along this road. Some highlights with parking are Wanapum State Park on the left, The Cove on right, Huntzinger boat launch area below Wanapum Dam and finally JWT access. Scope recommended. ❖ DR

30. LOWER CRAB CREEK (Grant County). Shrub-steppe, pond, wetland, and river. **Birds:** terns, ducks, loons, thrushes, sparrows, and swallows. **Directions:** This is a site across the river worth checking out (especially during spring migration). At the Columbia River: I-90 exit 137, south on SR26, turn right onto SR243. (a) At milepost 20 in Beverly, turn east on Burkett Rd (Road 17 SW) to Burkett Lake Recreation Area on right. Parking safely for next 5 miles east is good birding along Crab Creek. (b) South of Beverly, Crab Creek Park at the creek mouth offers river views. ❖ MR

A Birder's Guide to Kittitas County



Additional Resources:

- Kittitas Audubon**, www.kittitasaudubon.org
email: kittitasaudubon@hotmail.com
- Book**
Washington Ornithological Society, Jane Hadley, ed., *A Birder's Guide to Washington*, 2nd edition, American Birding Association, 2015, 630 p.
- Maps**
Kittitas County Road Atlas, online search: "Atlas, road – Kittitas County"; \$30 or print individual pages.
Wenatchee National Forest, Cle Elum Ranger District, 803 W. 2nd St, Cle Elum, WA 98922, (509) 852-1100 or online search: "discovernw.org/maps/wenatchee", \$9.
WA Dept of Fish and Wildlife, wildlife area maps available at local and regional offices: 201 N Pearl, Ellensburg or 1701 S 24th Ave, Yakima. Coal Mines trail map (#8), online search "roslynmuseum coal mines trail". Roslyn Community Forest (#10), online search: "Roslyn urban forest". Additional walking trail information: Washington Trails Association, www.wta.org, search by trail or area.
- Permits**
Northwest Forest Pass available at national forest ranger station or sporting goods retailer, online purchase: online web search "discovernw.org/permit" or 1-877-874-6775, \$5 day pass or \$30 annual.
Senior Pass ages 62+ for access on all federal lands and parks, online web search: "store USGS.gov Senior", \$10.
Discover Pass (required on all WA State lands and parks) available at any hunting/fishing license retailer, online at www.discoverpass.com or 1-360-322-9963, \$11.50 day pass or \$35 annual.
SnoPark Permit, a winter parking pass, available at state parks, ranger stations and some local retailers. Online web search: "fortress.wsa.sno park", 1-3 day pass \$30.



Waterfowl @ Irene Rinehart ©Gloria Lindstrom

Credits:
Photos on front cover:
Lazuli Bunting ©Doug Kuehn
Sage Thrasher ©Craig Johnson
Mountain Chickadee ©Christine Webb

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A guide for birders of all ages and experience.

☼ = summer ♠ = fall ❄ = winter ☀ = spring ❖ = all seasons, FP = NW Forest Pass, Sr = Senior Pass, D = Discover Pass, Sno = SnoPark Pass, R = restroom (primitive to flushable), M = Supplemental maps recommended, H = Handicap accessible, C = Good clearance vehicle recommended, IBA = Important Bird Area

The Kittitas County Birding Trail Map begins just east of Snoqualmie Pass where the Iron Horse State Park/John Wayne Trail (JWT) begins its span of the County from west to east traversing many of the variety of habitats. A few of the best trailheads are mentioned here but others are worth exploring. The JWT is non-motorized and allows hiking, bicycles, horses, skiing and snowshoeing.



f. Ruffed Grouse
©Doug Kuehn

1. **GOLD CREEK POND.** Riparian forest, pond, and meadow. **Birds:** warblers, Gray Jay, hummingbirds, and swifts. **Directions:** I-90 exit 54, turn north, then right on FS 4832. At 0.9 mile left onto FS road "Gold Creek", follow about a mile. At the gate, turn left into paved parking lot. ❖ D Sno R H

2. **JOHN WAYNE TRAIL (JWT) at HYAK.** Shrubby wetlands surrounded by mixed fir forests. **Birds:** Red-breasted Sapsucker, hummingbirds. **Directions:** I-90 exit 54, turn south. In <1/4 mile turn east on SPUR 906 towards Iron Horse State Park. At 0.4 mile, just before the WSDOT facility, turn right, followed by immediate right into the parking lot. ❖ D Sno R

3. **LAKE EASTON STATE PARK.** Forested lake transitioning from fir trees to Lodgepole Pine. **Birds:** Osprey, Bald Eagle, Pileated Woodpecker, Harlequin Duck, Bufflehead, merganser. **Directions:** I-90 exit 70, turn south following signs to Lake Easton State Park and drive 0.5 mile to entrance on right. Turn right into the Park at the first stop sign, travel one mile to the second stop sign and turn right again. Continue on to the "fishing bridge". Parking is on the left side just before the bridge. Walk across bridge for trail along the Lake. The boat launch offers good viewing of winter ducks. ❖ R H

4. **EASTON PONDS.** Riparian creeks and ponds accessible by trails, bridges and other amenities. **Birds:** kingfisher, raptors, osprey, cormorants, Greater Scaup, Bufflehead, Common Merganser. **Directions:** I-90 exit 71, north to Tree Farm Rd. Follow the road around the bend to where it parallels I-90. Make a left into the parking area. ❖



Cooper's Hawk
©Ginger Jensen

5. **HUNDLEY ROAD.** Heavily wooded river bottom with interlinked wetlands and ponds. **Birds:** warblers, kingfisher, ducks, osprey, woodpeckers, flycatchers, chickadees, creepers, and nuthatch. **Directions:** I-90 exit 78, turn north and then left on Hundley Rd. Continue to the turn around and turn right onto the WDFW access to the Yakima River. Parking area at the River. ❖ ♠ D R

6. **JWT AT BULLFROG ROAD.** Dry Ponderosa Pine forest and riparian river corridor. **Birds:** warblers, kingfisher, and Common Merganser. **Directions:** I-90 exit 80, turn south and then right on Leisure Land Lane. The JWT crosses the road in about a mile with an unimproved parking area just beyond it. The road continues 0.5 mile on to the Yakima River (parking and tables). Traveling west on the JWT takes you through open Ponderosa Pine and meadows before reaching the next trailhead at Golf Course Rd. Traveling east, the JWT passes a timber storage facility and into the confluence area of the Yakima & Cle Elum Rivers. ❖ ♠ D

7. **CLE ELUM RIVER CORRIDOR.** River bottom, wet forest and pond. **Birds:** finches, sparrows, dipper, and thrushes. **Directions:** I-90 exit 80 north 0.7 mile on Bullfrog Rd then left on Tumble Creek Drive and an immediate left on gravel road to paved parking area. ❖ R

8. **COAL MINES TRAIL.** Mostly riparian with open Ponderosa Pine transitioning to Douglas fir along a 5 mile, gravel trail from Cle Elum to Ronald with 4 trailheads. **Birds:** sparrows, finches, (feeder birds), and forest hawks. **Directions:** a) Cle Elum at West 2nd and Stafford Avenue. I-90 exit 84 turn north at the South Cle Elum Way stoplight. Travel one block crossing 2nd Street. ❖ R b) Roslyn at Pennsylvania Avenue. From the Cle Elum trailhead continue north on SR903 (2nd St) to Roslyn. At Pennsylvania Avenue turn right. The trailhead/parking is on the right in about a block. ❖ c) Roslyn off Washington Avenue. From Pennsylvania Ave turn left. The street dead-ends in the city park parking lot and the trail continues behind the stand of trees past the ballfield. ❖ R d) Ronald behind the Ronald General Store. Continue on SR 903 to Ronald and watch for the General Store on your right. The trail ends here. Kiosk and a couple of parking spots are available. ❖



W. Meadowlark
©Doug Kuehn

9. **STREAM "C" CORRIDOR.** Wet woods and riparian streamside. **Birds:** warblers, tanager, vireo, crossbills, and hummingbirds. **Directions:** From downtown Roslyn go west on Pennsylvania Ave., follow the signs to the cemetery winding through a residential neighborhood. At the cemetery turn right and just beyond the cemetery on your left is a chained driveway. Park here without blocking the entrance.

The Trail starts just past the fenced area. The trail is not marked. At the first road it jogs to the right and goes straight across at the second. Near the bottom of the drainage is a large meadow. Continuing along the trail brings you to a wetland and the Cle Elum River. ❖ ♠ ☀

10. **ROSLYN URBAN FOREST.** Mixed open Ponderosa Pine/Douglas fir forest. **Birds:** woodpeckers, tanager, jays, finches, sparrows, and flycatchers. **Directions:** Follow the directions to and use the parking lot for site 8b. Walk up the paved driveway through the Plum Creek Timber facility. Follow any of several trails through the Forest. Some trails have markers left by mountain bikers. ❖ M

11. **SALMON LA SAC NORTH.** Old-growth forest, riparian corridor and grassy lakes. **Birds:** Varied Thrush, warblers, Clark's Nutcracker, Gray Jay, raptors, Harlequin Duck, mergansers, chickadee, nuthatch, and swallows. **Directions:** From Cle Elum go north on SR903 19 miles toward the Salmon la Sac Campground; paved road. Just before crossing the bridge to enter the campground turn right onto the gravel FR4330 (Fish Lake Rd). Follow FR4330 to its end, about 12 miles (rough road) at the Cathedral Pass trailhead. Trail #1345 Cathedral Rock is strenuous and steep. #1376 to Hyas Lake is easy but brushy (mosquitos). Hike the old growth forest and listen for nesting Varied Thrush in summer. Parking at other trailheads and recreation sites. There are concrete creek crossings on FR4330 so take care as warmer days may cause snowmelt to increase water depth at the crossings. ❖ ♠ FP Sr R M C



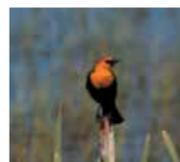
Rufous Hummingbird
©Christine Webb

12. **NORTHERN PACIFIC PONDS.** Ponds, wetlands and dry forest. **Birds:** ducks, eagle, osprey, woodpeckers, and warblers. **Directions:** From First Street in Cle Elum turn south on South Cle Elum Way. At I-90 overpass and the Salmon mural turn right on Charter Rd which parallels RR track and I-90. Ponds are on your left. Parking is on the right across from the kiosk. Continuing west on Hatchery Rd, the Yakama Nation operates a fish hatchery which can be toured by appointment. ❖

13. **MCDONALD ROAD POND.** Private salmon acclimation pond. Auto/roadside viewing; stay outside the fence. A scope is useful. Pond usually freezes in winter. **Birds:** eagles, ducks, geese, and swans; river otters frequently seen here. **Directions:** From First Street in Cle Elum turn south on South Cle Elum Way. Go through South Cle Elum and follow Lower Peoh Point Rd. After the road passes under I-90, MacDonald Rd is the first left. ❖

14. **JWT at LOWER PEOH POINT ROAD.** Farms, river corridor, dry forest, and cliffs. Picnic tables and river viewing areas. **Birds:** Chestnut-backed Chickadee, dipper, merganser, nuthatch, and Winter Wren. **Directions:** Follow directions to site #13 but continue 2 miles further on Lower Peoh Point Rd to a school bus turnaround on your left. Parking is restricted during AM and PM busing times when school is in session. The trail access from the east end of the parking area is a short steep, brushy path. Following the JWT east at this point is the best way to access the Upper Yakima River Canyon. ❖ D

15. **TEANAWAY RIVER BRIDGE AND ENVIRONS.** Wetlands, pond and river riparian. **Birds:** dipper, Virginia Rail, ducks, (River Otter). **Directions:** I-90 exit 85, turn north on SR970 (toward Wenatchee). In approximately 2.1 miles turn right onto SR10. In about 1.1 miles SR10 crosses the Teanaway River on a concrete bridge. Parking is on both sides of the road with wider than normal shoulders near the bridge. Use caution in parking and walking as boaters use this area and traffic speeds by. Areas to check: a) under the Teanaway River bridge there have been nesting A. dippers; b) about 0.25 miles back toward Cle Elum (walk it) is a metal gated entrance and access to a pond; c) a second non-maintained entrance about 0.1 miles west is an overgrown path giving access to a wetland. ❖



Yellow-headed Blackbird
©Doug Kuehn

16. **SWAUK PRAIRIE ROAD.** Dry forest, prairie, and private farmland, including a bison ranch. Driving Loop-Auto Viewing. **Birds:** Horned Lark, Mountain and W. Bluebirds, W. Meadowlark. Rough-legged Hawk (winter) and other raptors; Long-billed Curlew have been spotted here. **Directions:** I-90 exit 85, turn east (right) onto SR 970 (toward Wenatchee). In about 8 miles turn left onto Swauk Prairie Rd (a loop road) which turns east (right) in ~ 1/4 mile, then south winds back to SR970. ❖

17. **SWAUK DISCOVERY TRAIL.** A 2.8 mile trail through partially burned, mid-elevation forest. Watch as the area regrows from a 2012 wildfire; Forest Service maintains trail and plans to install new interpretive signs about fire recovery. **Birds:** sapsuckers, warblers, chickadees, and nuthatches. Good views of Mt. Rainier and Kittitas Valley. **Directions:** I-90 exit 85 turn north on SR970 (toward Wenatchee). In about 10 miles it merges into US 97. Continue to Blewett Pass, watch for Swauk Discovery Trail signs and turn right into the parking area. Trail access is from FR 9716 at the upper end of the parking area. ❖ R FP Sr SNO

18. **REECER CREEK-TABLE MOUNTAIN.** High mountain forest and grassland. **Birds:** owls, hawks, Clark's Nutcracker, chickadees, crossbills and fall migrating raptors. **Directions:** I-90 exit 106, north and straight at the 4 way stop (east on University Way) for about .5 miles. Turn north (left) onto Reecer Creek Rd. Stay on Reecer Creek Rd for 12 miles at which time the road becomes FR35 and becomes a 1 lane paved road with turnouts. Follow signs toward Lions

Rock/Haney Meadows. The pavement ends in about 9 miles. Continue for 2 miles on the gravel road and you will come to an intersection. To complete the Loop continue toward Haney Meadows until you reach FR 9712, take a left to FR 9716 then to US97 near Blewett Pass and site 17. One highlight is Diamond Head, which was used by Hawkwatch International until the late 1990s. ❖ ♠ R M C

19. **HAYWARD HILL/BETTAS ROAD.** Prairie and open pine forest. Auto Viewing. **Birds:** bluebirds, raptors, sparrows, Horned Lark, and Sage Thrasher; also deer and elk. **Directions:** I-90 exit 101 (Thorp), north on North Thorp Highway through the town of Thorp to the intersection of SR10. Go straight across onto Hayward Hill Rd. This is a non-maintained county road and may be marginal in some weather conditions. The road climbs the hill and passes through the Kittitas Valley wind energy site along the top of the hill before ending at Bettas Rd which can be traveled in either direction to US97. At US97 turning right (south) goes back to Ellensburg, north goes to site 17. This is some of the best auto birding around. Spring flowers are wonderful. ❖ ♠ ☀ C

20. **TANEUM/MANASTASH LOOP.** Farms, riparian, variety of forested and alpine areas. **Birds:** forest raptors, warblers, chickadees, nuthatch, vireos, Lazuli Bunting, owls, Golden Eagle. **Directions:** I-90 exit 93, turn north. Turn right onto Thorp Prairie Rd. At the bottom of the hill take a right onto East Taneum Rd. Cross the freeway overpass and take another right onto West Taneum Rd. Follow it west to Gnat Flat Rd. Follow signs to Buck Meadows, Manastash Creek and exit to Ellensburg via Manastash and Umptanum Rd. This can be an all-day drive. Stay on the main graveled road or explore dirt side roads to places such as Quartz Mtn. This loop may be reversed by taking I-90 exit 109, north on Canyon Rd to Umptanum Rd, to Manastash Rd. ❖ ♠ FP Sr D R M

21. **ROBINSON CANYON.** Wetlands, riparian, and open pine forest. Open May 1 to late November. **Birds:** owls, warblers, sparrows, woodpeckers, vireos, jays, and flycatchers. **Directions:** I-90 exit 101, south on South Thorp Highway, right on Killmore Rd. In 2.5 miles turn right on Robinson Canyon Rd 1 mile paved and 1 mile gravel to the west gate to L.T. Murray Wildlife Area where there is parking. When open you are allowed to drive past the gate to a second parking area. This site is known statewide for unusual birds. The trail up the creek may have rough areas, washouts or fallen logs that can be circumvented in the open forest, and connects with a number of other informal trails and disused roads. ❖ ♠ D



Wood Ducks ©Doug Kuehn

22. **IRENE RINEHART RIVERFRONT PARK.** River flood plain with mature cottonwood forest interspersed with Ponderosa Pine. **Birds:** ducks, shorebirds, dipper, oriole, woodpeckers, wrens, kinglets. **Directions:** I-90 exit 109, north on Canyon Rd and then left on Umptanum Rd. Just prior to the Yakima River take a right at the park sign. Parking is to your left. During the summer season you may continue through a gate to Carey Lakes with additional parking. There are trails along the river and around Carey Lakes. Meet us here at 8:00AM for the First Saturday BirdWalk every month. ❖ R

23. **PONDS SOUTH OF ELLENSBURG.** Variety of ponds and riparian areas. **Birds:** ducks, osprey, raptors, shorebirds, dipper, and heron. **Directions:** I-90 exit 109, north take the first right into Bar 14 Restaurant parking lot. Travel to the back of the Bar 14 Restaurant lot to the farmer's access. Bar 14 Pond (private) is to the east. Use a scope from outside the gate. Return to Canyon Rd and turn south. If open, check the Ellensburg Sewer Treatment Plant on the right across from Berry Rd. Otherwise, turn east onto Berry Rd, and south at the next intersection to Morris Sorensen's Pond (private) on the left side and observe from wide spot on the eastside of Berry Rd. Continue south to Tjossem Rd, turn right and Tjossem Pond is on the right, parking on the south end. Turn south on Canyon Rd to Woodhouse Loop Rd., turn left for .2 mi, park on the left near the ponds. Continue east and south on Woodhouse Loop Rd to ponds on the right. Continue south on Woodhouse Loop across Canyon Rd onto Ringer Loop Rd. Park at parking lot for trails near river. Return to Canyon Rd, turn right; Helen McCabe State Park (R, D) is on the left at Thrall Rd intersection. ❖

24. **UMTANUM CREEK RECREATION AREA.** Riparian corridor, river, and shrub-steppe. **Birds:** pelicans, falcon, eagle, swallows (all 5 species), Canyon and Rock Wren, Lazuli Bunting, Yellow-breasted Chat and California Bighorn Sheep. **Directions:** I-90 exit 106 turn south on Canyon Rd. about 12 miles, turn right at the sign to a parking lot near the swinging bridge which crosses the Yakima River. Watch for rattlesnakes in the summer. ❖ R Fee Sr IBA

25. **FAIRVIEW DISTRICT LOOP.** Private farmland and pasture. **Birds:** This area is best known for wintering hawks and Bald Eagles. Also look for Barn Owls, magpies, swallows, swifts, nesting Swainson's Hawk, and a variety of migratory sparrows and warblers. **Directions:** Take Old Vantage Hwy (University Way) east from Ellensburg. Turn north on Wilson Creek Rd. The Fairview District is the farmland east and north of Wilson Creek Rd and Lyons Rd. Explore the roads by auto and park safely on the side of the road. ❖

26. **NE KITTITAS COUNTY.** Riparian, shrub-steppe climbing to high alpine near the top. Most of NE Kittitas County above the farming areas is state public land. **Birds:** woodpeckers and warblers. Many roads and canyons allow